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COVER: Adrienne Corri in A STUDY IN TERROR (1966),
Sylvester Stallone in JUDGE DREDD, Val Kilmer in BATMAN FOREVER

Scarlet Letters

Wow! SS #18 takes a bold step forward with two such disparate but equally fascinating articles as Richard Lupoff's piece on Edgar Rice Burroughs and Paul Jensen's search for Philo Vance. I was beginning to think that Jeremy Brett and Sherlock Holmes had become a life sentence.

I'm sure I was not alone in discovering the worlds of adventure and science-fiction through the pages of Edgar Rice Burroughs. My only prior exposure to unknown worlds had been in the books of Jules Verne, who was one of my father's favorite authors. After Burroughs, I moved on to Zane Grey's incomparable stories of the American West, and to the exotic crime fiction of Sax Rohmer, who wrote a great deal more than merely the Fu Manchu series.

When I ran The Buster Crabbe Fan Club in England during World War II, we had a competition in which readers were asked to make casting suggestions for a film of Burroughs' John Carter of Mars. Guess who was the unanimous favorite to play the title role!

Detective stories entered my life later, but Philo Vance was an early hero. I'm probably one of the few people still around who remembers seeing 1936's **THE SCARAB MURDER CASE** shortly after its original release in England. Unfortunately, my memory has not left me with any impressions to write about, but I still know the name of the cinema, and its location, where I saw the film, if not the title of the cofeature.

Forty years later, I met Wilfrid Hyde-White when we were casting **THE CAT AND THE CANARY**. He referred to **REMBRANDT** as his first film and when I cautiously mentioned **THE SCARAB MURDER CASE**, which was produced in the same year, he looked at me and said, "You're a dangerous man, Mr. Gordon."

I also greatly enjoyed reading the interviews with Herman Cohen and Michael Gough. Unfortunately, you did not ask Michael about **HORROR HOSPI-**

TAL. He might have told you some very funny stories about it.

Richard Gordon
Gordon Films, Inc.
New York, NY

We love hearing from Richard Gordon here at Scarlet Street, whether he's writing to praise our efforts or to take us to task. Hope he enjoys the return of Philo Vance in this issue—and (ahem) the return of Jeremy Brett in the next.

Thanks to you and Richard Scrivani for A LITTLE NIGHTMARE MUSIC (SS #18). John Morgan, who's a fine composer himself, is doing all of us a giant favor by making this old horror music available and he deserves credit for it. However (and I think John knows better), too much credit has been given to Hans Salter



for this memorable music when, in fact, it should rightly go to Frank Skinner and, to a lesser extent, Charles Previn. Skinner was the one who composed the bulk of THE WOLF MAN and SON OF FRANKENSTEIN and those two pictures supplied most of the cues that everyone remembers from all of the Universal horror films that followed. In addition, Skinner supplied music for DESTROY RIDES AGAIN, SABOTEUR, ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN, MAN OF A THOUSAND FACES, and many more.

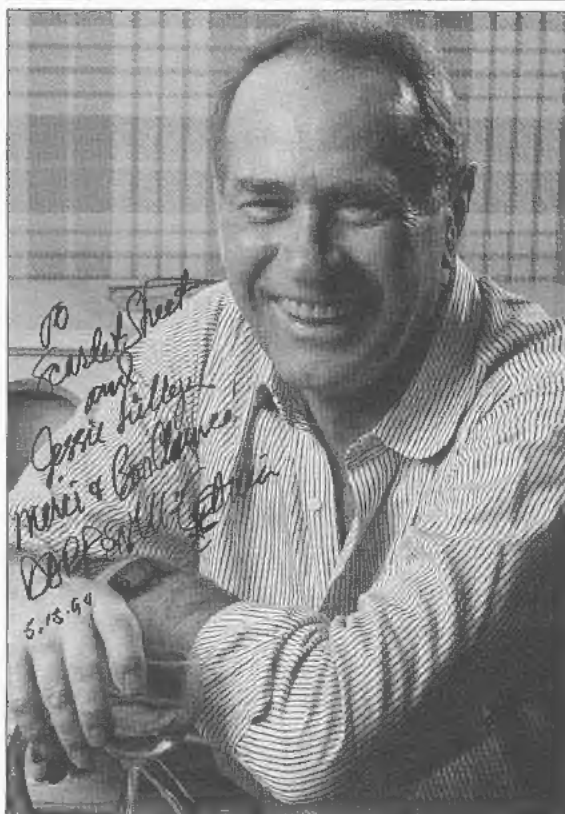
I think Salter was the music director at Universal and, though he did compose a great deal of music himself, I believe he's getting a lot of credit for music written by others. The best thing about his score for HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN is the main title, which is a reworking of THE WOLF MAN. (Listen to Salter's album of his music for CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and you'll discover he didn't write the main title; the best music from that film was the work of Herman Stein and Henry Mancini.) If we must single out one composer to credit, it should be Frank Skinner, not Hans Salter.

Keep up the good work.
Mark McGee
Duarte, CA

As a longtime enthusiast of Hollywood's Golden Age, particularly in regard to horror and sci-fi films, I'm beginning to feel an annoyed ambivalence toward *Scarlet Street*. Why? Two reasons.

One: the inexplicable gay-themed articles that continually find their way into this periodical. This is supposedly "the magazine of mystery and hor-

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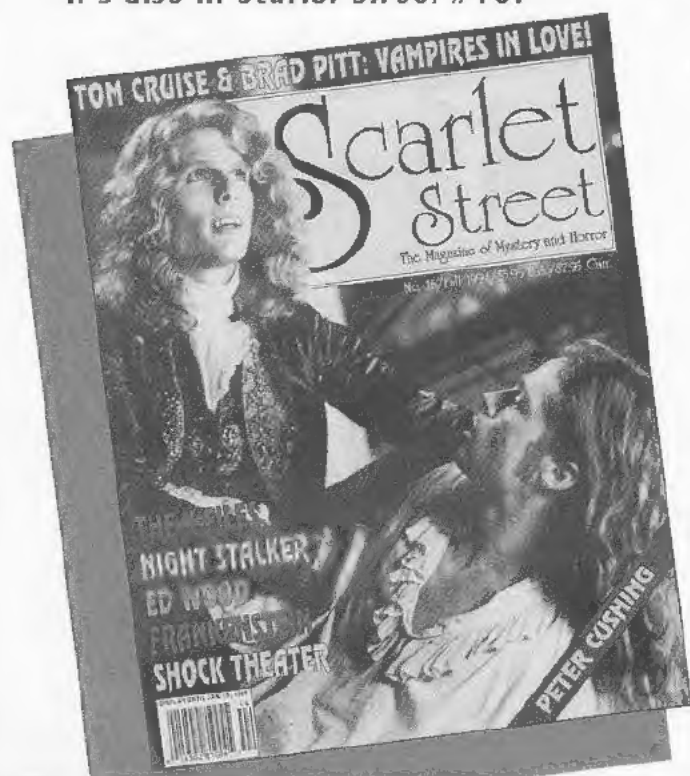
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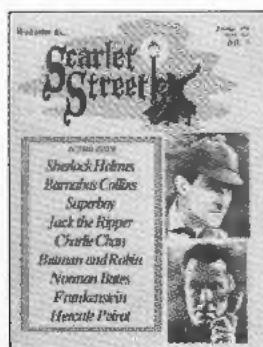
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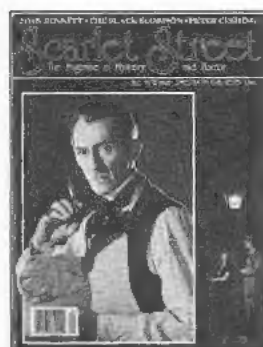
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SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 4

ror," not "the magazine of gay mystery and horror." Why does the subject keep popping up? I, for one, have no interest in it. It is not why I buy the book. *TALES OF THE CITY*? Is it mystery or horror? What a waste of valuable print space.

If the editorial staff has an agenda, fine. But *Scarlet Street* should be up front about it, so readers know what they are getting into and can make a more informed purchasing choice. Frankly, implying that Ygor and the Monster and Holmes and Watson are that way is both insulting to the artists who originally created such classic characters as well as being irresponsibly delusional.

Two: the continually (with the odd exception) derisive, condescending, and negative manner in which the classic films are discussed. I was under the impression that *Scarlet Street* was here to appreciate the great old films and thus introduce them to a new generation of fans. However, if one takes Michael Brunas' article on *IT! THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE* (SS #17) as a typical example, *Scarlet Street* is going about it in a very odd manner.

Though Mr. Brunas ends his article with praise for *IT!*, anyone who has read his preceding paragraphs is at a loss to understand how he could say such a thing. After all, according to Brunas, *IT!* has no plot (though it takes four long paragraphs to describe the plot of this plotless film), barely developed characters (what about Marshall Thompson's obvious anguish over what happened on Mars, or the Thompson/Smith/Spalding triangle that develops), and cheap sets (why didn't they hire Industrial Light and Magic). It's also racist (servile token ethnics who will die in the film because of their race) and sexist (the women clean up and make coffee—oh, the degradation).

Running these films through some 1995 PC gauntlet is both incredibly unfair and more than a little intolerant. In 1958, how were they supposed to know what the political trends would be 30 years hence? Come on, Mr. Brunas! Come on, *Scarlet Street*! The way *IT!* was handled is *de rigueur* for this periodical and is just plain wrong. It results in an attitude of scorn and contempt by current generations toward these great films. Consequently, few will

wish to take the time to see them, and those that do will probably view them through the PC tunnel vision that you have created and dismiss them as racist, sexist dinosaurs to be quickly forgotten.

You are making ours the last generation who will love and promote these wonderful films of the imagination. You are condemning these films to oblivion and leaving for future generations Freddy, Jason, and the rest of the refuse of this decade. Bradbury's Department of Moral Climates and Orwell's Big Brother would be well pleased. I, on the other hand, am angered and saddened. While it's probably political, I can't begin to understand your motives. You profess to love these films and have made them your life, as it were. Yet you act to destroy them? Why? Why?

James J. J. Janis
Malverne, NY

Richard Valley replies: There was certainly an element of mystery (not to mention an homage to Hitchcock's *VERTIGO*) in the plot of *TALES OF THE CITY*. I chose to feature *TALES* in *Scarlet Street* knowing that the se-

Continued on page 12

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(1990) - A temporary employment agency finds a great way to reduce overhead: create zombies to hire out! They're hard workers and you don't have to pay them. A woman becomes suspicious when her lazy brother suddenly becomes a workaholic. Her investigation gets her into grave trouble. \$19.95.



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(1991) - A witch's curse haunts the male members of a family. One of them thinks he's a puppet. The other tries to solve the mystery and break the curse. Then the long dead witch returns from the dead to complete her vengeance. But is the twentieth century too loony for her? \$19.95.



CHAINED FOR LIFE

(1950) Daisy and Violet Hilton, the Siamese twins who appeared in *Freaks*, star in this nearly plotless drama. One of them is on trial for murder, but what happens to the other? \$11.95



MYSTERIOUS MR. WONG

(1935) Lugosi plays Chinaman Wong in this early Monogram mystery. Wong is the bad guy here, not the detective from the Karloff films. He's an evil scientist type who runs Chinatown. \$11.95



THE INVISIBLE GHOST

(1941) Lugosi overacts in this morose film about a murderer supposedly haunted by his wife's invisible (i.e. no effects involved) ghost. Notable for cheap sets and bad sound. \$11.95



INTOLERANCE

(1916) Directed by D. W. Griffith, starring Henry B. Walthall, Lillian Gish. This epic film, describing the ravages of prejudice and intolerance in several historical eras, is now regarded as a classic, but at the time Griffith was unable to make his costs back, and it nearly sank his career. Tod Browning, later a famous director, is in some scenes - as an actor! \$11.95



THE BLUE ANGEL

(1930) Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, Hans Albers. Kind of an early version of *My Fair Lady*. One of the first sound German films. \$11.95

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the fabled train. Off we went to Venice!

The show concerned my partner, Don Sheffrin, being "murdered" by a member of a party of travelers who had hired us. My job, as detective Hercule Clurrot, was to find the killer!

The trip took us from the Hotel Cipriani in Venice on a boat chase through the canals—then the elegant Orient Express whisked us across Italy. Don ("returned to life" as my twin brother) and I gathered prearranged clues that pointed directly to Mr. Big—in this case a charming woman who graciously went along with our accusations and confessed!

The train, restored to the polished splendor it displayed in *MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS* (1971), then took us through the Alps. I must confess to a moment of weakness, during which I led my fellow travelers through a chorus of "The Sound of Music."

Don and I finally disembarked in Innsbruck, while the rest of the passengers went on to Paris.

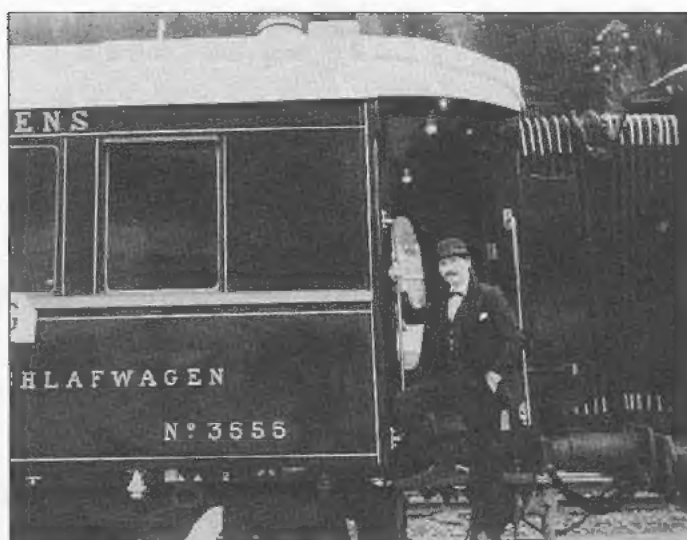
By the way, "Murder to Go" is America's oldest professional mystery show. For information, call (201) 301-0121.

Well, I see that Kevin managed to plug his show, and even got in a musical reference to a certain Julie Andrews vehicle, so let me take back the floor and wax rhapsodic for a moment. (While I'm at it, I might as well wax the floor. You know how

messy these actors are.)

As those who follow this column know all too well, I've a mad passion for movie musicals equal to my mad passion for mysteries and fright flicks. In cahoots with Turner Classic Movies, Rhino Records recently put out the first in a series of beautifully remastered soundtrack recordings from a few of the very best MGM musicals: *MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS* (1944), *ZEIGFELD FOLLIES* (1946), *EASTER PARADE* (1948), and *SHOW BOAT* (1951). Trust me, these are sheer heaven for anyone who shares my love for these films. Now if Rhino and Turner will just get around to releasing a soundtrack of one of my personal favorites. That's right, circus fans... *BILLY ROSE'S JUMBO* (1962). Please, Rhino! Please, Turner! I'll be your best friend!

As always, we have some fantastic features lined up this issue, so if Saucy Jack isn't your crimson cup of tea, I'm sure you'll find something else to whet your wicked appetite. And I don't suppose it will hurt to let you in on just one of



Scarlet Staffer Kevin G. Shinnick boards the Orient Express for a spot of detective work.

the upcoming treats in our very next edition—namely, an exclusive interview with Miss Deborah Kerr, who kindly and graciously answered some questions about her participation in one of film's greatest ghost stories: *THE INNOCENTS*, based on Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*. That's just one of the devilish delicacies in store for you, loyal readers, so be sure to haunt the newsstands this fall for *Scarlet Street* #20—or, better yet, subscribe right now so you'll be sure not to miss it!

The beast is yet to come!

Richard Valley

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SCARLET STREET

Continued from page 8

quel, MORE TALES OF THE CITY (which is really the first story's conclusion), contained a large chunk of mystery and horror. Little did I suspect that cowardice on the part of PBS would rob viewers of further installments.

As to the rest of your first objection—well, everything is political, isn't it? Lighting a cigarette is political, and if I say I'm strongly opposed to smoking—which I am—then I open myself up to accusations of pushing a personal agenda. Unlike Mr. Gingrich and his Contract on America, Scarlet Street has no agenda—but we do have certain policies. We do not ignore the fact that many of the artists we cover, from James Whale in the '30s to Clive Barker in the '90s, were (or are) gay. We do not agree that speculation over a fictional character's sexuality is "insulting" to the creator of that character. Scarlet Street has a sizeable gay readership and a staff composed of both straight and gay writers (all of whom, I assure you, are responsibly delusional). We'll continue to run occasional "gay-themed articles" in our pages, as well as "straight-themed articles"—though, for some reason, nobody's complained about the latter.

One last point: Michael Brunas' remarks about the sexism in IT! THE

TERROR are hardly the result of his running the film through "a 1995 PC gauntlet," since Ann Doran, one of IT!'s stars, voiced the same objections while making the picture in 1958—and continued to voice them in the interview that ran with Mike's article.

Isn't that sad? Losing Peter Cushing, Robert Bloch, and Roy Ashton within a few months. These three men were the kindest, nicest human beings imaginable, apart from the fact that they were among the best in their professions. The world (and the genre we love) is a much sadder place without them.

While the tribute to Peter Cushing was fine, I was not so pleased with the article on THE SKULL as tribute to Bob Bloch. (SS #17) The only connection between him and the movie is the fact that it was based on a short story by him, while there are many movies which were not only based on his work, but involved him in writing the scripts. ASYLUM was his favorite, and a look at that movie would have made a more fitting tribute to the great writer.

I just learned that there were plans to erect a bust of Peter Cushing in his hometown of Whitstable, but they didn't collect enough money to do it. Isn't that sad? Maybe one

should try to ask fans all over the world for a contribution to this.

Uwe Sommerlad
Frankfurt am Main
Germany

We live in hard times, in that so many genre greats have reached an age in which death (no prince as far as we're concerned) looms ever larger. We can't run tributes to everyone without turning Scarlet Street into one long obit page. THE SKULL was ready for printing and, while it may not have been the most appropriate tribute to Robert Bloch (it was not originally intended as such), it did serve to let us acknowledge his passing.

Praise be to Scarlet Street, the only magazine that has the guts to tell it like it is!

My wife Debbie and I were delighted to find George Hatch's WHO KILLED TEDDY BEAR? piece in Issue #17, but what really impressed us was that Hatch didn't shy away from discussing star Sal Mineo's private life.

Fandom, unfortunately, is a world in which legions moan that Bela Lugosi wasn't accurately portrayed in ED WOOD (all that cursing and swearing!), while no one utters a word if a homosexual is presented as heterosexual in his life story,

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Edmund G. Bansak

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Tom Weaver

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which seems to be the case with the forthcoming James Dean biopics. The hypocrisy stuns me!

I bet you'll get some complaints about #17's Mineo and Dean material from your more tight-assed readers, but I say, "Good work!"

Stephen McBride
Columbia, SC

I thoroughly enjoy your magazine. Usually. However, with issue #17, all's I have to say is this otherwise fine issue was ruined by the "rebels without their clothes" kind of pictures. Stick to horror and mystery photos, and leave the homoerotic stuff to Mapplethorpe.

Dave Henderson
Baltimore, MD

I've been meaning to write my congratulations on your sterling magazine for some time, but Issue #18 forces me to my typewriter. That your fine magazine brings back the nostalgic feeling of "let's run upstairs and dive into this issue to see what's there" I used to get back in 1958 when I'd get my *FM* in the mail is well-documented by your readers, but this latest was just about perfect. (It would have been, but *PARANOIAC* has three A's.) Filled with treats, well-written articles, un-

usual "haven't seen that one" stills, in-jokes, fresh takes on old topics it was outstanding.

My favorite article was Tony Earnshaw's lovely recounting of Peter Cushing's memorial service. Like many fans of this beloved actor, I wish I could have been there. Through *Scarlet Street*, it's almost like I was. Genuine, touching, graceful, respectful, observant, right down to chapter and verse... it was really lovely.

That John Brunas and Paul Jensen are fine reviewers is well-known. Good work from both. After reading the account of *BLACK ZOO*, I got out my old "45" of Rod Lauren singing "Listen, My Love." *Scarlet Street* has that effect on me. Frequently, after one of your reviews, I'm left with the inclination to say, "Now where can I find that?"—and with your new video service, I possibly can.

Now, then, WHO KILLED TEDDY BEAR? (SS #17) I dismissed as trash on its original release (before I realized what fun trash can be). George Hatch makes me want to see it. I'd never even heard of *THE KILLING KIND* (SS #12) until Richard Valley's fine article made me want to see it. The coverage on *BOMBA* (SS #15) even makes me want to check some of those out! I was also glad

you picked up on *REBEL HIGHWAY*; I was hoping to see coverage on that. Some episodes were mediocre, but Robert Rodriguez's entry was superlative.

Well, kudos would fill a magazine of their own. I hope to see coverage of *DEEP END* (an unsung thriller with Diana Dors and *Scarlet Street* fave John Moulder-Brown) someday, and a *Scarlet Street* treatment on Kevin McCarthy. More, too, on efforts of film preservation, particularly the silent era—but with talents like Richard Valley and Drew Sullivan at work, I know it will come.

Blessings on yer heads, gang, or as Saint Peter (Cushing) would say, "Full marks."

Farnham Scott
Sunnyside, NY

Hey, not bad for a mag that's "condemning these films to oblivion."
Thanks, Farnham!

Scarlet Street #18 was another issue packed with eclectic and penetrating popular culture coverage. I enjoyed the interview with veteran actor Michael Gough. He has accumulated an impressive list of genre credits, as noted in the interview prologue. One of my favorite "haunted house" movies was *THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE* (1973),

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HOWL OF THE DEVIL (80) (Paul Naschy) (Spanish language, English subtitles) (X)
ZOMBIE II (87) (Lucio Fulci, in English)

Mexican Features (In Spanish Language)

SANTO & B. J. DEMON IN THE WORLD OF THE DEAD (69)
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scripted by Richard Matheson from his own novel. Michael Gough had a brief, silent, but very memorable cameo at the picture's conclusion. Gough appears as Belasco, an evil figure reminiscent of the notorious Aleister Crowley.

Just prior to assuming the role of Alfred Pennyworth in BATMAN, Gough appeared in the Wes Craven voodoo feature THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW (1988).

I liked this issue's dual focus on comic books and movies. As Buddy Scalera said, the two mediums have a "symbiotic relationship." Mr. Scalera does a fine job assessing the four-color field for *Scarlet Street*.

Timothy M. Walters
Muskogee, OK

This is my very first fan letter to all you wondrous gals and guys at the head office of one of my absolute favorite genre magazines. I have not been reading/collecting you all that long, as I originally discovered you with ish #15, but I definitely plan on making this a serious relationship! I have heard of *Scarlet Street* for some time, but did not actually meet it face to face until a regular scouting expedition at our local noose-stand. I was immediately drawn to your magnifico cover...

and with that debut glance, I was hooked.

I am a very avid fan of horror, fantasy, sci-fi, and action/adventure. I grew up reading *Famous Monsters*, *Castle of Frankenstein*, *For Monsters Only*, and a whole slew of others, so I am most certainly not a greenhorn. I am a die-hard collector these days, and also write for one of your competitors: *Scary Monsters Magazine*. You may have heard of it.

One reason I happened to choose the current time to get in touch is to praise Jessie Lilley for her devotion to her mail-order customers. I recently had a small problem with a piece of merchandise, and Ms. Lilley was very gracious and helpful. That makes all the difference in the world when dealing with the purchasing public.

I do have one major inquiry for the creative staff at SS: How about adding an annual/yearbook to the fold? That would sure be cool.

Continue the fab work on *Scarlet Street*. I have only one tiny complaint: I wish you'd go monthly!!!

Until we meet again, take scare

Jeff Kurta
Ironwood, MI

We've more than just *heard* of *Scary Monsters*; we grab each and every fear-filled issue, and heartily suggest

that *Scarlet Streeters* do the same. There are mags out there for which competing is everything, run by paranoid publishers who will do anything to keep other mags from getting ahead, but *Scary Monsters* is a pal, not a competitor. Oh, and thanks for the kind words about our ever-growing mail-order arm, which is in the capable claws of Tom Amorosi and Jessie Lilley. Between them, they've made *Scarlet Street Video and Books* a rousing (and, in the case of some films, arousing) success

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Here's the lineup ...

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 61 (#DI-61)*



ROBERT CLARKE

Plus



HIDEOUS SUN DEMON (1959) Robert Clarke, Patricia Manning, Nan Peterson, Del Courtney. After exposure to radiation, an atomic research scientist finds himself changing into a murderous, lizard like monster every time he's exposed to the rays of the sun. Cheap, but lovable. Look for the 'bat scene' which is missing from most prints. Our pre-print material is stunning.

PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE (1958) Bela Lugosi, Tor Johnson, Gregory Walcott, Tom Keene, Lyle Talbot, Joanna Lee, Dudley Manlove, Paul Marco. Director Ed Wood's legendary classic 'buddle.' Not the worst movie ever made, (try watching MESA OF LOST WOMEN or THE ATOMIC BRAIN sometime) but certainly one of the most lovable. Aliens use the bodies of the dead to become their murdering, zombie slaves.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 62 (#DI-62)*

BLACK SABBATH (1963) Boris Karloff, Mark Damon, Michelle Mercier, Jacqueline Pierreux. A Mario Bava masterpiece! Karloff hosts and stars in this superb trilogy of horror stories, all of which are unforgettable. "The Drop of Water" concerns a nurse who steals a ring of a dead spiritualist only to have the corpse seek revenge. "The Telephone" features a prostitute who's terrorized by phone calls from a dead client. The final and best is, "The Wurdalak" featuring Karloff as a vampire who preys upon the blood of his loved ones. AIP scored big with this one.

FIRST SPACESHIP ON VENUS (1963) Gunther Simon, Karl Rockelmann, Yoko Tani. An international expedition is launched to the planet Venus. There they find the planet and its former inhabitants completely destroyed by atomic war. Crew faces many perils including a blob-like monster. Some fine special effects (for its time) are featured in this enjoyable sci-fi thriller.



Plus



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 63 (#DI-63)*



THE VAMPIRE (1957) Gorman Robles, Abel Salazar. The grand-daddy of Mexican vampire films. An evil Count threatens to put the bite on a beautiful young girl. Much inspired by the earlier Universal horror classics, with some nice atmosphere and good looking sets—in spite of the film's low budget trappings.
CURSE OF THE DOLL PEOPLE (1960) Ramon Gay, Nora Veyran. A voodoo curse is put on a group of tourists who steal a Haitian devil doll. A lot of ghoulish little critters are roaming the countryside in what is one of the better K. Gordon Murray Mexican horrors. Recently remastered.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 64 (#DI-64)*

THE SINISTER URGE (1950) Kenne Duncan. James Moore. Jean Fontaine, Carl Anthony, Dino Fantini, Conrad Brooks. Ed Wood's campy expose of the smut picture racket. Like all of Ed's previous films, it reeks of his usual warped, twisted, naïve genius. Police try to track down a sex killer and put an end to the smut picture business that inspired his hideous crime. Ed, himself, appears in a fight scene. From 35mm.

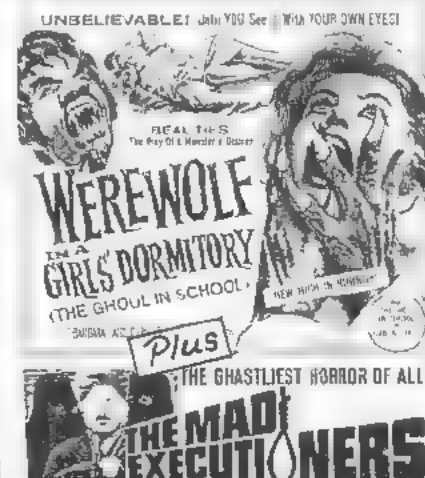
THE VIOLENT YEARS (1955) Jean Moorhead. Barbara Weeks. Timothy Farrell, I. Stanford Jolley. Ed Wood wrote this wildly entertaining screenplay about a gang of young girls that hold up gas stations and vandalize schools. The "rape" scene involving the gang girls and a young male captive is hilarious. Brought out of mothballs by Headliner Productions to fill the lower berth on a double bill with **SINISTER URGE**. From a stunning 35mm print.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 65 (#DI-65)*

WEREWOLF IN A GIRLS' DORMITORY (1963) Barbara Lass. Carl Schell, Curt Lowens. A creepy, gothic tale about a snarling werewolf on the prowl at a girls reform school. Suspicion falls upon a new teacher after a horrible animal-like slaying takes place. Is it really the murdering beast? It played with **MAD EXECUTIONERS** only as a spot double feature, its regular companion film was **CORRIDORS OF BLOOD**. From a gorgeous 35mm print.

THE MAD EXECUTIONERS (1963) Wolfgang Preiss, Chris Howland, Maria Perschy. A mad scientist decapitates his victims and tries to keep their heads alive. Meanwhile, a group of strange vagabonds are capturing and murdering criminals without benefit of public trial. Is there a connection? Scotland Yard investigates. Released by Paramount. Partially letterboxed in the scope format.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 66 (#DI-66)*



THE SADIST (1963) Arch Hall, Jr., Helen Hovey, Richard Alden, Marilyn Manning. The greatest low-budget, psycho-horror movie ever made, period, bar none. Three people driving into L.A. for a Dodgers game have car trouble and pull into an old wrecking yard where they're held at bay by a bloodthirsty psycho and his crazy girlfriend. They put their captives through pure hell in this thriller mad was easily 10 years ahead of its time. A classic you will never forget. From 35mm.

PSYCHOMANIA (1963 aka **VIOLENT MIDNIGHT**) Lee Philips, James Farentino, Dick Van Patten. Are murders on the rise featured in this terrific little psycho-horror film about a mad killer loose in a small New England town. Who is the mad killer? An impressive cast that went on to great personal successes a few years later. From the man who gave you **HORROR OF PARTY BEACH**.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 67 (#DI-67)

LADY FRANKENSTEIN (1972) Joseph Cotten, Sarah Bay, Mickey Hargitay. Baron Frankenstein's daughter creates a monster of her own to satisfy her bizarre sexual desires! Screaming naked ladies and rampaging monsters are featured in this rousing color horror shocker shot in Europe. Beautiful color. Definitely rated "R".

BEAST OF THE YELLOW NIGHT (1971) John Ashley, Mary Wilcox. A wicked out disciple of the Devil is able to absorb evil from the souls of the people he murders. He eventually turns into a horrible monster and is hunted down by the local police. Roger Corman was executive producer for this unusual Filipino shocker. Color. From 35mm.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 68 (#DI-68)*



TERROR IS A MAN (1959) Francis Lederer, Richard Derr, Greta Thyssen. An excellent sci-fi/horror opus shot by an all English speaking cast in the Philippines. A mad scientist transforms a panther into a man-like creature that escapes and goes on a rampage. Featuring an outstanding music score! Dozens of horror/sci-fi films have been shot in the Philippines, this is undoubtedly the best.

FACE OF TERROR (1959) Lisa Gaye, Fernando Rey, Gerard Tichy. A schlocky but fun mixture of horror and science fiction. Rey plays a scientist who develops a serum that can eradicate scar tissue. He transforms a young girl's horribly disfigured face into a thing of beauty again. Unknown to him, she's an escaped lunatic from a local asylum. After her treatment, she escapes. Later on, her face starts to look rather odd. From 35mm.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 69 (#DI-69)*

MAN WHO LIVED AGAIN (1936, aka **DR. MANIAC**) Boris Karloff, Anna Lee, John Leder. Boris lets it all hang out as he plays the mad Dr. Laurence who invents a fantastic machine that will transfer personalities from one body to another. Great lab scenes and a terrific climax. One of the classic horror films of the 1930s. Never seen it? You're missing one helluva movie. Re-released on the Texas drive-in circuit in the 1950s as **DR. MANIAC**.

THE HUMAN MONSTER (1939 aka **THE DARK EYES OF LONDON**) Bela Lugosi, Hugh Williams, Greta Gyrd. One of the best shockers of the 30s. Bela gleefully murders people and then throws them out his window onto the mud flats of the Thames. The setting is an eerie home for the blind. A hair-raising final sequence that still packs a lift. Also widely re-released during the 1950s and '60s. A dusk-to-dawn staple of many drive-ins.



DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 70 (#DI-70)

DR. JEKYLL VS THE WEREWOLF (1971) Paul Naschy, Jack Taylor. A man afflicted with lycanthropy becomes tired of turning into a snarling werewolf. He seeks out the grandson of the infamous Dr. Jekyll in the hope of finding a cure. Better than usual Naschy effort. A beautiful transfer from a beautiful print. **IT HAPPENED AT NIGHTMARE INN** (1972 aka **NIGHTMARE HOTEL**) Judy Geeson, Victor Alcázar. A grisly film in which murder victims are hidden in large containers of cooking wine. This chilling, Spanish horror film was upgraded a couple of years ago from a nice 16mm original print which contains approximately seven minutes more footage than our previous master.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 71 (#DI-71)*

MONSTER FROM GREEN HELL (1957) Jim Davis, Barbara Turner. Radiation in a certain region of Africa causes ordinary wasps to mutate into giant monsters that run amok, killing many of the local citizens. A scientific research expedition sets out to investigate. Good old '50s sci-fi schlock.

HALF HUMAN (1955) John Carradine, Morris Ankrum. A world ale about a strange race of Japanese gnomish snowmen and the attempts by man to capture and exploit them. American scientists Carradine and Ankrum explain what's going on. Some great outdoor monster shots. From 35mm.

DOUBLE FEATURE NO. 72 (#DI-72)*

HANDS OF ORLAC (1960) Mel Ferrer, Christopher Lee, Donald Woll, Dany Carol. A well done remake of **MAD LOVE** with Ferrer as the pianist with the transplanted criminal hands and Lee as the sleazy magician who blackmails him. Carol has a body that won't quit. A slickly done British horror thriller you won't forget soon.

THE TELL-TALE HEART (1960) Lawrence Payne, Dermot Walsh. A very unusual and very entertaining adaptation of the classic Poe story. A shy loner discovers the girl he loves in the arms of his best friend. Murder and horror follow in dramatic fashion. Probably the best filmed version of this famous story.



THIS OFFER ABSOLUTELY ENDS AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT NOVEMBER 30, 1995!

the NEWS HOUND

Photo © 1994 United Artists Pictures Inc.

Welcome back, Scarlet Ones, to the Hound's side of the Street, where the traffic's not the only thing that snarls....

Wring that wedding belle! Former FLY fancier Geena Davis may soon wed the man of her nightmares. Producer Ron Howard would like her to stroll down the aisle in his new version of BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. And please stick around for the reception, because FRANKENSTEIN SINGS. At least he will in Gotham Entertainment's new feature, which stars Anthony Crivello (Tony winner for KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN) and Candace Cameron from TV's FULL HOUSE. Perhaps Frank will be recovering from the previous night's bachelor party at the BORDELLO OF BLOOD—that's the new TALES FROM THE CRYPT movie that's just finished shooting, featuring supermodel Angie Everhart as a voluptuous vampire. All this nuptial nonsense is enough to make you wanna go out and tie the noose!

While we wait for these and other unique attractions, queue up at the quintaplex for current releases DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE from Savoy Pictures, SPECIES from MGM, and Universal's WATERWORLD, starring Kevin Costner as a futuristic gill-man (minus the Black Lagoon). In August, make it a point (get it?) to see HELLRAISER IV (Miramax), with Doug Bradley returning as the prickly Pinhead; FAIR GAME, the Warner Bros. thriller starring Cindy Crawford and her flimsy T-shirt, GOD'S ARMY (also from Miramax), with Christopher Walken as an avenging angel; and Clive Barker's latest (and endlessly postponed) creepy concoction LORD OF ILLUSIONS from MGM.

Also scheduled for August release is October Films' NADJA, starring Elina Lowensohn as a member of a family of Romanian emigre vampires living in New York City's East Village (where vampires attract little or no attention). Elina returns to the Old Country to avenge

the staking of her old bat of a father at the hands of Dr. Van Helsing, played by B movie icon Peter Fonda. David Lynch is the executive producer of this unique thriller.

And speaking of the good Doctor... Francis Coppola's planned production of THE VAN HELSING CHRONICLES is languishing in limbo following Anthony Hopkins' decision to drop out of the project. Instead, Sir Tony will likely copro-

Photo: Rick Torrey



Scott Bakula is a detective battling the supernatural in Clive Barker's LORD OF ILLUSIONS.

duce and star in New Line Cinema's THE DIARY OF JACK THE RIPPER. The script, by THE ELEPHANT MAN's Chris De Vore, is based on the controversial 1993 publication that purports to be the journal of Ripper suspect James Maybrick. Shooting (slashing, actually) starts late this year in London. Hopkins has requested on-set caterers to go heavy on the fava beans.

As The Hound hinted last time, Mel Brooks is hard at work on his latest mirthful monster spoof: DRACULA: DEAD AND LOVING IT. In addition to directing, Brooks plays

(yet another!) Dr. Van Helsing, opposite Leslie Nielsen as Count Dracula—surely a casting coup. (But don't call him Shirley!) Also in the cast are TV performers Steven Weber (WINGS) and Amy Yasbeck (BAYWATCH), as well as Lysette ("Angelique") Anthony, Mark Blankfield, Peter MacNicol as Renfield, and Harvey Korman as Dr. Seward, head of the insane asylum. (Shades of HIGH ANXIETY!)

Further features currently rolling. FRIGHTENERS, reteaming BACK TO THE FUTURE's Michael J. Fox and producer Robert Zemeckis, is a comedy from writer/director Peter Jackson. Considering Jackson's track record (DEAD ALIVE, HEAVENLY CREATURES), expect a heavy dash of the bizarre... Robert Rodriguez (EL MARIACHI) directs the vampire Western FROM DUSK TILL DAWN, from an early 1980s Quentin Tarantino script. Tarantino himself stars in the Miramax release (no one has the guts to tell him he can't act), along with current TV heartthrob George Clooney (the Hound prefers his Aunt Rosie)... Longtime genre scribe Don Glut goes Hollywood—on a budget—as the producer, writer, and director of DINOSAUR VALLEY GIRLS. SS interviewee William ("Blacula") Marshall and Karen Black star; genial genius Ken Walker provides animation effects... SOMETIMES THEY COME BACK—AGAIN is a Trimark theatrical followup to the 1991 CBS telefilm based on Stephen King's *Graveyard Shift* short story. Unfounded rumors abound that the King's recent grocery list is the basis of a new 13-part miniseries. Watch this space.

Scheduled to shoot later this year: Warner Bros.' assassination conspiracy thriller THE DAMOCLES NETWORK from director Sam Raimi, possibly to star Johnny Depp, possibly in male clothing... Caws for alarm! THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS, a Miramax sequel to Brandon

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Lugosi at the Academy Awards

by Bob Madison

The legendary horror star Bela Lugosi has finally won the Oscar. Kind of.

When Martin Landau won the Best Supporting Actor Academy Award for his brilliant recreation of Bela Lugosi, thousands of horror fans shared in this moment of supreme vindication. (Like the larger-than-life characters Lugosi played, it's difficult to talk of the man without poetic excess.)

With the start of the "Monster Boom" in the late 1950s, Bela Lugosi was rediscovered by a legion of new, devoted admirers. Too bad the man himself died just before this incredible groundswell of popularity. Throughout the 1940s, Lugosi appeared on countless monster mag covers, almost nightly on television, was the horror star who was the most fun to imitate, inspired an Aurora model kit and became the basis of a cult less visible now than in the "Monster Boom's" heyday, but no less fanatical.

To the Lugosi fan, critics are little better than a nuisance, and not to be taken seriously. For a long time, talking to the uninitiated about his remarkable presence or theatrical delivery would result in nothing more than a blank look. Fans argue that Boris Karloff was the better actor, that after 1945 Lugosi made few (if any) films of interest, that Lugosi always played himself, but such criticism is meaningless to those who fall prey to Lugosi's peculiar charm. It is the personality, the man himself, that is incredibly magnetic. There are few performers who could be as compelling, as watchable, as Lugosi, even in his worst films.

Martin Landau gave new life to this extraordinary performer in Tim Burton's *ED WOOD* (1994). Landau's towering, powerful performance remains the core of this Burton's warmest, most human film.

Lugosi's voice and mannerisms are so familiar that it would seem an impossibility for an actor to breathe life into the role. But Landau presents us with an incredibly human portrait. His Lugosi is proud, tragic, theatrical, and touching. Tales of Lugosi's courage in struggle with addiction, anonymity, and industry abuse are well known to genre buffs, but never before has the actor's desperation been rendered so real. It is impossible not to feel for the man.

The Lugosi of *ED WOOD* is no paragon. Some genre magazines have taken the film to task for that, but they seem to miss the point entirely. Landau's Lugosi is strong, proud, stalwart, profane (especially when it comes to rival horror star Boris Karloff), and human. Even if, as detractors insist, the film distorts the facts, isn't this a fine way to memorialize the man? And for those viewers unfamiliar with the man and his work, isn't this a fabulous introduction? Lugosi is the most fully realized character in Burton's oeuvre, and we can feel in the Landau performance Lugosi's urgency, his battle against illness, hardship, and his own mortality.

Martin Landau comes to his empathy for the character naturally. A fine actor who showed early promise, he later hit extreme career lows. He has worked with Hitchcock in *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* (1959) and played the villain in *THE HARTFORD GLOBETROTTERS ON GILLIGAN'S ISLAND* (1961). He has starred in more than his share of sleazy exploitation shockers. It was not until *HICKET* in 1988 and a Best Supporting Actor nomination (shared by a second nomination for Woody Allen's *CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS*, 1989) that his career was revitalized. It was a second chance that Lugosi was never granted.

When Landau accepted the Academy Award, "Monster Boomers" around the globe sat back in satisfaction. We had known Lugosi's worth as a performer when as children we sat in our cluttered basements and watched *Dracula* and *Ygor* and *Wills Werdegast* on *SHOCK THEATER*. He has moved from cult figure to the Hollywood heights, part of the history of the most prestigious award the industry knows. While it was Martin Landau's performance that won, it was a performance soundly grounded in Lugosi, the man and his work. Landau was the author, not Lugosi the creator.

Bela Lugosi was never accorded the honor of an Academy nomination during his troubled lifetime, but now, albeit in proxy, he has an Oscar to his credit.

It would be the old spoken word.

Bob Madison has written for *Wonder and Cult Movies*.





The Return of Dr. Watson

David Burke returned with his customary charm and good humor to the role of Dr. John H. Watson, which he last played in 1984, for the recent A&E presentation of *BIOGRAPHY: SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE GREAT DETECTIVE*.

Burke played the good doctor in the initial 13 episodes of the landmark Granada series starring Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes, making his first appearance in *A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA* and taking his last bow with *THE FINAL PROBLEM*, in which the Great Detective supposedly met death at the hands of Professor Moriarty. In fact, it was Burke, not Holmes, who had come to the end of the line, opting to join the Royal Shakespeare Company at Stratford-on-Avon. The role of Watson went to Edward Hardwicke, who played it in the remaining 28 programs.

On *BIOGRAPHY*, "Watson" reminisced about his good friend at a dinner held by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. Additional footage included a rare 1928 interview with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who revealed (no surprise here) that he wrote more Holmes stories than was ever his original intention.

Though the now-bearded Burke left Watson behind over a decade ago, his family was not entirely finished with the series. Actress Anna Calder-Marshall, Burke's wife, appeared in 1993's *THE ELIGIBLE BACHELOR* in the dual roles of Helena and Agnes Northcote—and it was Calder-Marshall who suggested that Hardwicke replace Burke!

—Richard Valley

NEWS HOUND

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Lee's final feature, this time starring Vincent Perez of *THE USUAL SUSPECTS*... *THE DENTIST*, Tobe Hooper's latest from Orion, about aliens who breed inside the bicuspid of unsuspecting humans (turn and spit, please)... and Paramount's *THE SAINT*, if they ever get a lead actor. Mel Gibson turned them down. The Hound suggests Hugh Grant—or Hugh Hefner. We understand Timothy Dalton may be available....

As usual, Hollywood has a batch of remakes in the hopper. Future examples include Richard Matheson's *I AM LEGEND* from Warner Bros. (filmed twice before), Walt Disney's *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH*, Warner's *FAHRENHEIT 451* starring Mel Gibson, and a new version of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* from Fox, starring Gerard Depardieu, Bob Hoskins, and Patricia Arquette. (Hitchcock filmed it as *SABOTAGE* in 1936.) Paramount will unearth yet another Mummy movie (see last issue), this one from director Richard Donner.

Baby Boomers may succumb to attacks of déjà video when big-screen, live-action versions of *JONNY QUEST*, *SPEED RACER*, *THE WILD, WILD WEST*, and *CHARLIE'S ANGELS* show up in theaters. And, of course, sequels are in the works to *JURASSIC PARK*, *THE MASK*, and

STAR TREK. The eighth Enterprising voyage is tentatively set for release on Christmas, 1996. (In a clever plot twist guaranteed to please thousands upon thousands of Trekkers, producer Rick Berman falls off a bridge and dies.) Also, Messrs. Spielberg, Lucas, and Ford are due to begin filming the fourth Indiana Jones epic this January.

No, it's not a remake, it's not a sequel, it's the welcome return of the Real McCoy... *VERTIGO* is due back in theaters soon. Hitchcock's deliriously dizzy masterpiece, just recently voted by international producers and critics as one of the four best films ever made, is due for major archival restoration similar to that performed on *SPARTACUS* and *LAWRENCE OF ARABIA*. A brand new print will be struck by Universal for this effort, and a limited theatrical run will precede a new video and laserdisc release.

Turning to the boob tube... *LOIS & CLARK: THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN* (ABC) and *STAR TREK: VOYAGER* (UPN) will be back on (and in) the air this fall. Agents Mulder and Scully will also return to investigate more of *THE X-FILES* on the Fox network... *EARTH 2* has completed its final orbit: it's missing from NBC's lineup... Time to face virtual reality: the terrific Fox series *VR 5*, a favorite of your Hound's, has been deleted from the hard drive. Taking its place on the

fall Fox schedule will be *STRANGE LUCK* starring D. B. Sweeney (*FIRE IN THE SKY*), who portrays a photographer who psychically causes unpredictable events to happen. Hey, maybe he'll get hold of a Nielsen ratings box.

Other new series debuting on Fox this fall include *KINDRED: THE EMBRACED* from producer Aaron Spelling, starring C. Thomas Howell as a cop who battles a Mafia-like vampire underworld; and an ambitious intergalactic war adventure, tentatively titled *SPACE*, from *X-FILES* producers Glen Morgan and James Wong. The Newcomers make a welcome return in the Fox TV-movie *ALIEN NATION: BODY AND SOUL*. Still more upcoming telefeatures from Fox: *THE DEEP END* (about something slimy in the swimming pool), *THE MONSTERS* (from producer John Landis), *NICK FURY* (Marvel Comics' agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.), *DOCTOR WHO* (a new origin story featuring a new cast), and a miniseries update of the '60s favorite *THE INVADERS*. (Rumor has it they plan to kill off original series star Roy Thinnes.)

Currently premiering on the Showtime cable network: *ROGER CORMAN PRESENTS*, a new series of 13 telefilms that offers both original features and remakes of some of Corman's classics of the '50s and

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Armistead Maupin, whose delightful *TALES OF THE CITY* miniseries is a favorite with *Scarlet Streeters*, was one of 31 recipients of the prestigious Peabody Award on May 8, 1995. The Peabody is the broadcast and cable industry's most highly regarded prize. Other winners this year included astronaut Alan Shepard, author Michael Crichton, and Barbra Streisand. Bill Moyers hosted the event, held in Manhattan's Waldorf-Astoria. *Scarlet Street* met Maupin at the reception before the ceremony. With him was Terry Anderson, his life-partner and biggest fan.

Scarlet Street: Congratulations on the award! What are the chances that *MORE TALES OF THE CITY* will be produced?

Armistead Maupin: Nil. Channel Four, the original American/British producer, held out for almost a year, looking for \$4 million to match the \$4 million they had reserved for it. They simply could not find a single American network that would subsidize the sequel.

SS: Are you aware that Showtime is saying the project is not dead, just postponed?

AM: Well, they're full of shit. Showtime has been out the project for almost six months, now. If they think they're going to revive it, they are going to have to pick up the whole thing. I'll be pleasantly surprised if that happens.

SS: What are you proudest about with *TALES OF THE CITY*?

AM: The degree to which we treated everyone's lives in a matter-of-fact way, and the way in which we showed the similarities between gay people and straight people, and bisexuals and

Peabody Wags Tales

Armistead Maupin's

TALES OF THE CITY

wins the coveted Peabody Award

Interview by Bob Madison

transsexuals, and, heaven help us, Republicans.

SS: What's next for you?

AM: I'm currently working on the screen adaptation of *Maybe the Moon*, my latest novel. *Maybe the Moon* should be of special interest to *Scarlet Street* readers. I don't know why exactly, but I always think of you all as a rather colorful bunch! It's about a 31 inch actress who's trying to become a star in Hollywood. Her chief claim to fame is that, 10 years earlier, she wore a rubber suit and impersonated a beloved elf in a famous Hollywood classic. Her face has never been seen by the American public, but she still has come to represent a great American icon. The story was inspired by a friend of mine, Tammy DeTreaux. She was one of the little people who inhabited the rubber suit of E. T. Through my friendship with her, I came to realize that there are a lot of people in Hollywood who contribute to the mythology, but whose faces are never seen. They're dwarves who are told that they themselves are unsuitable for the American public to see, but their size enables them to play some cute little creature that Hollywood invented.

And that strikes me as a wonderful metaphor for the way things work in that city. So, the novel revolves around this woman's efforts to be seen as herself in the industry that she loves so much. Along the way, she falls in love with a six-foot black man, and her best friend is a gay writer who just happens to have fallen in love with the man who, as a child, played the little boy in the movie that the

dwarf starred in. People tell me that my work is riddled with coincidence, but that's the way life works, I find.

SS: How does it feel to be a literary man caught in Hollywood?

AM: It was a pretty thrilling experience for me, and most of the people involved in *TALES*. All of the actors have told me that it was the happiest experience in their acting lives. There was nothing more exhilarating than seeing this landscape that I had created in my mind almost 20 years ago take some sort of three-dimensional form. Here's a tidbit for all you cult fans out there: *TALES OF THE CITY* was shot on the same soundstage where they filmed *WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO BABY JANE?* and *THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE*. I felt that we had all the right ghosts—between Coral Browne and Bette Davis, it was bound to work!

SS: How does moviemaking compare to writing novels?

AM: The process is so much less lonely than writing. I found it a great treat. Terry and I were the resident ghosts on the set of 28 Barbary Lane. We could look at any scene of the movie and remember which room of the house we were in when they were shooting. When the big pot party was going on in Anna's living room . . .

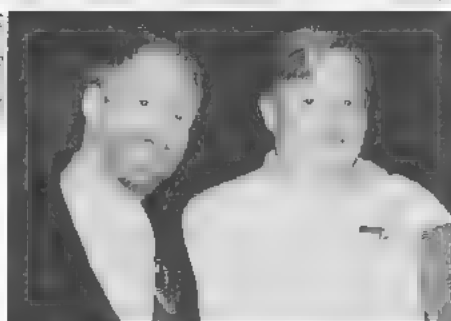
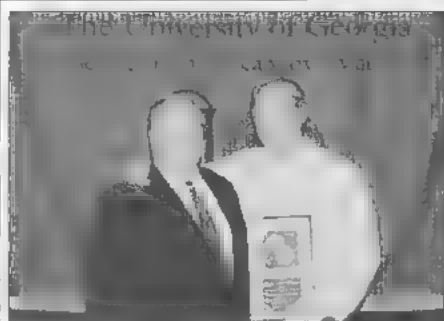
SS: That looked like fun.

AM: For people smoking herbal cigarettes, they were doing a great job of impersonating the real thing. But while shooting that, Terry and I were on the bed in Anna's bedroom, listening to what was happening. It became our house for six weeks.

SS: Any thoughts on the cultural swing to the right and it's effects on artists? Particularly gay artists?

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PREVIOUS PAGE: The cast of the award-winning *TALES OF THE CITY* surrounds Armistead Maupin. LEFT: Peabody board member Bruce Dumont and Maupin flash the Peabody Award. CENTER: Terry Anderson joins Maupin for the celebration. RIGHT: Thomas Gibson and Bill Campbell work up a sweat in *TALES*.

PEABODY WAGS TALES

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AM: The attitude of the Christian Coalition amounts to nothing short of cultural genocide. They have stated as their personal goal the obliteration of gay images in the national media. This was vividly demonstrated following the airing of *TALES*. The legislature of the state of Oklahoma added a rider to their public television appropriation bill after *TALES* appeared, saying that no state money could be spent on television properties that in any way cast homosexuality in a positive light. So, the really dangerous thing about the fundamentalist mindset that seems to be ruling the country and governing the content of television these days, is not that it's different, but that it doesn't respect differences in other people.

SS: Do you think the pendulum is going to swing further to the right before it heads left?

AM: I think it will. And it's going to take some major rethinking on the part of reasonable, progressive Americans. We've spent too long sitting by and laughing at the right wing while they organized us right out of our personal liberties. We're going to have to sit down and look at what's really

valuable in this country, and preserve it.

SS: What do you see as the artist's place in society?

AM: It has always been my intention to subvert narrow minds. From the very beginning, I've wanted to change people's minds about people they don't understand. I think that was my goal in *Maybe the Moon* in taking on the way in which little people view the world. My chief goal as an artist is to tell the truth of my own experience, my own vision of life, as honestly as I can. And I think when you do that, you end up appealing to a surprisingly large number of people. They often feel divided from the rest of the world in ways we don't imagine. I have a 17 year old straight friend with AIDS, who told me that the "coming out" letter that Michael Tolliver writes in *More Tales of the City* to his parents made a huge difference in his life because it taught him to stop blaming himself for the amount of abuse his parents put him through. We all need to forgive ourselves and to forgive others, 24 hours a day, and there's very little of that going on in American culture today. That saddens me. There are people who tell me that *Tales* was a completely Utopian vision, but I've

structured a life for myself that's not far different from the one people live in *Tales*. I have straight friends that I'm as intimate with as my gay friends. And all of us have learned to find our "spark" at our core, the thing that we relate to, the thing we end up loving. And that's not male or female or black or white or young or old—it's simply that core of humanity that you end up loving in another person. That's what makes it so easy for me to write about a wide variety of people. It's not very hard for me to imagine myself as a 31-inch woman, when all is said and done. I wrote an entire novel about that, and it didn't challenge me once I got past the logistics of it.

SS: Any last words for *Scarlet Streeters*?

AM: Thank you for your support. It was especially thrilling to see the magazine be one of the publications in the country who leapt to the defense of *TALES*. And I like the fact that you came to it from the vantage point of people who simply appreciate a good story. That's really what this is about in the long run: If you're told by the culture and the powers-that-be that certain areas of exploration are off-limits, then you become extremely limited as a storyteller. |

NEWS HOUND

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'60s. Included are *BLACK SCORPION*, starring Joan Severence as a masked crimefighter; *SAWBONES*, starring villainous vamp Barbara Carreras; and a remake of Corman's 1957 favorite *NOT OF THIS EARTH* (or is it a remake of the remake of 1988?) . . . Watch for two new Young Indiana Jones movies on (unfortunately) The Family Channel this fall. *TRAVELS WITH FATHER* and *ATTACK OF THE HAWKMEN*.

Fortunate subscribers to cable's Sci-Fi Channel can feast on a fearsome festival of classic monsters during the last two weekends in July. Scheduled are four Frankenstein films, including *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and *FRANKENSTEIN: THE TRUE STORY*; a trio of werewolf appearances by Henry Hull, Lon Chaney Jr., and Oliver Reed; and all three Black Lagoon *CREATURE* features. Coming soon on Sci-Fi will be encore telecasts of some favorite fantasy series: *THE*

FLASH, *"V"*, *TIME TRAX*, and *MAX HEADROOM*.

Lying in wait for you at your local video vault is *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* from Warner Home Video. Also available from Warner are the thrillers *DISCLOSURE* and *MURDER IN THE FIRST*. Other titles currently available for rental: John Carpenter's *IN THE MOUTH OF MADNESS* (Turner), the Nesnappy Scottish suspenser *SHAL-*

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Pitt and the Pendulum

by Tony Earnshaw

The pendulum has swung and it's official! Brad Pitt, who had insisted that he would never don fangs again, will reappear as haunted vampire Louis du Pointe de Lac in *THE VAMPIRE LESTAT*, the eagerly-awaited sequel to the phenomenally successful *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*. Recently, I spoke to Pitt in London and got this *Scarlet Street* exclusive.

In London with costar Henry Thomas (of *E. T.* and *PSYCHO IV* fame) and director Ed Zwick for the British premiere of *LEGENDS OF THE FALL*, which was actually filmed before he made *INTERVIEW* for Neil Jordan, young Mr. Pitt was asked whether he would lend his services to a second Anne Rice adaptation. His reply was enthusiastically in the positive.

He added, however, that his participation in the picture—in which the irrepressible Lestat becomes a rock star—would amount to only a handful of scenes.

"First of all, Neil's a wonderful man and I really enjoyed working with him. Second of all, Louis only comes in for about five minutes; all the other vampires bag on him and he leaves. So why not?"

Pitt found shooting *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE* a tiring experience. Jordan delayed the start of *INTERVIEW* in order to let Pitt, Zwick, and company finish their work on *LEGENDS OF THE FALL*. Consequently, Pitt was on daily call.

"Any time you do films back-to-back, it's quite a drain. You've gotta have some time in between to fill back up," said Pitt.

Zwick agreed. "With *LEGENDS*, we were really under the wire. Neil Jordan was actually quite generous. In order to let us make the film, he pushed his film back a couple of weeks.

"But we had to work to the stop date with Brad, which meant he was in every scene, every day. With this kind of physical film, it was very difficult and very draining."

"It was just a matter of going into *INTERVIEW* very tired. That's not the most uplifting of pieces," added Pitt, who revealed that the humorless nature of the part got to him.

"Did you see Louis? Did he smile once? Yeah, it was very depressing."

Talk about the inevitability of a sequel began even before *INTERVIEW* was in the can. Agents working for Jordan quickly snapped up the rights to a clutch of Anne Rice novels. Among them was *The Vampire Lestat*.

Jordan himself, after his extensive (and ultimately uncredited) rewrites of Rice's own script for *INTERVIEW*, is expected to put his own stamp on the new screenplay. He's also odds-on to helm the movie.

Interviewed earlier this year, Jordan said, "Anne Rice has written another book, which begins in Paris. It's very complicated. People are talking about it, obviously. I have to see the script they get out of it before deciding whether to direct it."

THE VAMPIRE LESTAT, which will topline Tom Cruise in the biting title role, is currently in early preproduction.





Scott Bakula and director Clive Barker discuss the next setup for **LORD OF ILLUSIONS**, a much-postponed fantastic film.

NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 22

LOW GRAVE (Polygram), the inaugural **TALES FROM THE CRYPT** feature **DEMON KNIGHT** (MCA), and **STAR TREK GENERATIONS** (Paramount), featuring the gleefully murderous Malcolm McDowell. (McDowell has said in interviews that he'll be glad to kill off any and **STAR TREK** crew members they throw at him. May the Hound suggest a certain space-station commander?)


Collectors may find these affordable titles tantalizing: Home Vision

Cinema has released Orson Welles' **THREE CASES OF MURDER** (first time on video), **F FOR FAKE** (Welles' final film), and **THE THIRD MAN** (a beautiful new print). The same outfit also offers the first video release of Joseph Losey's taut 1956 thriller **TIME WITHOUT PITY**, starring Michael Redgrave and Peter Cushing (mere moments before his Hammer stardom). And don't forget the new MCA releases of Hammer's **NIGHTMARE**, **PARANOID**, **KISS OF THE VAMPIRE**, and **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA**—frighten-

ingly affordable at \$14.98 each, and available (need I say?) from Scarlet Street Video

The menacing microbes of Warner's **OUTBREAK** will infect the rental racks in August, as will Metro Goldwyn Mayer's sci-fi comic-book inspired **TANK GIRL** starring Lori Petty, and Warner's drama **JUST CAUSE**, starring Sean Connery and Laurence Fishburne. Also in August, Fu Manchu fans will find their tongs hanging out at the release of **THE FACE**, **THE BRIDES**, and **THE VENGEANCE OF FU MAN-CHU**—three new-to-video titles starring Christopher Lee. They're priced at \$14.98 each from Warner Home Video, and they're available from... ah, but I repeat myself.

Collector alert! Turner Video has discontinued four classic RKO features: **KING KONG**, **CITIZEN KANE**, **THE THING** (1951), and **THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME** (1939), starring Charles Laughton. Buy now, or it'll be "bye, now."

We're all fortunate that the legacies of the following artists are available for our continued enjoyment: noir icon Elisha Cook Jr., Sir Michael Hordern, Eric Porter, director Cy Endfield, director Arthur Lubin, screenwriter Edwin Blum, cinematographer Philip Lathrop, Priscilla Lane, Katherine DeMille, Burl Ives, Tessie O'Shea, Dr. Paul Bearer (Dick Bennick), the lissome Ginger Rogers, and the bewitching Elizabeth Montgomery. 

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Boze Hadleigh is the author of *The Lavender Screen* and the recent *Hollywood, Babble On*. His book *Conversations With My Elders*, featuring six gay men of cinema, is now considered a cult classic.



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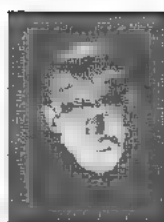
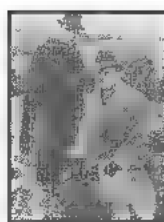
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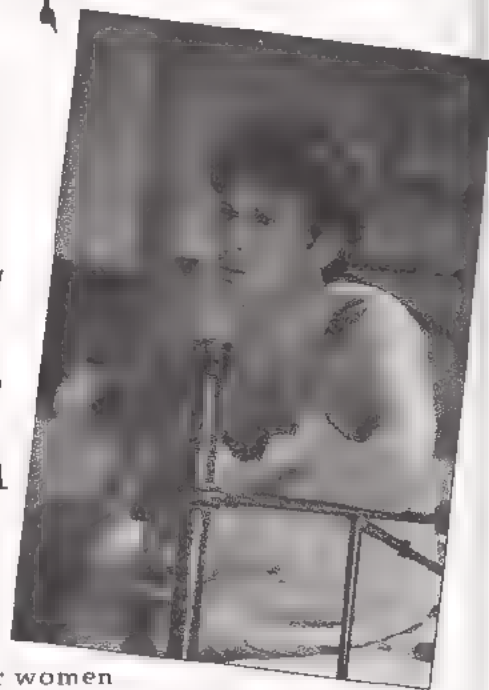
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Under the Hyde of Me

Tim Daly IS Sean Young!

by Drew Sullivan



Dr. Jekyll is back—and, to no one's surprise, Mr. Hyde has got him! Sort of . . .

Savoy Pictures' *DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE* is the frontrunner in the gathering stampede of Stevenson-inspired film and theater productions, and, as can be easily deduced from the film's title, something new has been added.

And subtracted.

The plot: Fragrance developer Dr. Richard Jacks (Tim Daly), great-grandson of the changeable Henry Jekyll, inherits the scientific notebooks of his infamous great-granddaddy, and tries to improve on a certain formula. Following family tradition, he tests the creepy cocktail on himself—and nothing happens.

The next day, however, at a business meeting, a strange metamorphosis takes place. Richard's hair begins to grow at an accelerated rate. His nails lengthen. His chest starts to swell. And his . . .

Cocktail, indeed!

Dr. Richard Jacks has been replaced by Ms. Helen Hyde (Sean Young), an aggressive young woman who will stop at nothing—even murder—to achieve her wicked ends.

Before you can say, "Ah, this must be a comedy," Helen is scoring brownie points with the *Omage* Perfume hierarchy (including such veteran laugh getters as Harvey Fierstein and Polly Bergen), and poor Richard is repeatedly being caught wearing hot little nighties and gay party frocks! The young doc's wife-to-be (Lysette Anthony) is understandably confused, but Richard's smarmy cousin Larry (Stephen Shellen) has just the gentle words to comfort her.

Richard, he explains, is a closet transvestite!

"I have a whole new respect for high heels," says *WINGS* star Tim Daly of his starring role in *DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE*. "My calves are killing me, but it's a classic comic gag, and has been for years."

"It's fun to see the battle between the male and female," agrees Sean Young, who first teamed with Daly for the NBC telepic *WITNESS TO THE EXECU-*

TION. "There are men who have a feminine side and they're always at battle with it, or women who have this masculine side who are trying to repress it."

Wait a minute, wait a minute—doesn't Sean Young live in Hollywood?

Daly sees his role as "helping the audience suspend its disbelief by making the science seem plausible. What really attracted me was the conceit of the movie itself. Although we borrow the transformation idea and the good and evil subtext from *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, there's really very little resemblance to the novella storyline here. I mean, this is a comedy, first, last, and foremost."

That's swell if *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* (1953) wasn't enough to satisfy that particular craving. Not so funny is the long-delayed *MARY REILLY*, now scheduled for a wintry debut. Based on the popular novel by Valerie Martin, the once-familiar story is here retold from the viewpoint of Dr. Henry Jekyll's maid (played by Julia Roberts), who is naturally confused by the quick-change artistry of her handsome employer (John Malkovich).

Then there's the "gothic musical thriller," *JEKYLL & HYDE*, which has managed to produce a cast album (on Atlantic) without getting any closer to Broadway than Houston, Texas. The show benefits from a (mostly) stirring score by Frank Wildhorn and Leslie Bricusse and a bravura turn by Anthony Warlow in the dual role.

THE NUTTY PROFESSOR, too, is getting a retread. Jerry Lewis' 1963 take on the classic tale is back before the cameras with Eddie Murphy in the two-faced lead, frantically mixing as many chemicals as are needed to revive his flagging career. (That's a lotta chemicals!)

As if that isn't enough, there are "Jekyll & Hyde" theme restaurants springing up all over the place. The burgers are great, but be careful what you drink!

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LEFT: The Doc (Tim Daly) keeps an eclectic wardrobe. RIGHT: The classic 1932 DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE.

DR. JEKYLL AND MS. HYDE contains the kind of monstrous transformation that hasn't been shown on-screen since Hammer Films had a go at the story in 1971's DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE. Visual effects supervisor Tim Landry and Dream Quest Images were called in to pull off the sexual reversal. (Lorena Bobbitt wasn't available.) According to Landry, director David Price "wanted to see a different kind of transition from the evil character to the good character and vice-versa. He wanted everyone to believe it was really happening. Tim Daly and Sean Young were incredible, because they were asked to perform at all hours, put up with heavy makeup schedules, and do these complex scenes."

Dream Quest worked closely during production with makeup effects artist Kevin Yagher, who was responsible for the prosthetics. Yagher made breast plates for both Daly and Young, and made breasts that deflate and inflate. (I thought they did that naturally.) When primary filming was completed, Dream Quest's computer animators were brought in for the morphing scenes.

"I'm hoping that what the audience sees is the most convincing transformation ever accomplished," concludes Landry. "No seams showing. No actors hiding behind a desk and changing makeup...."

Wait a minute, wait a minute—doesn't Tim Landry live in Hollywood?

LEFT: Hammer's DR. JEKYLL AND SISTER HYDE (1971). RIGHT: Dr. Jacks (Tim Daly) is hung again at last!





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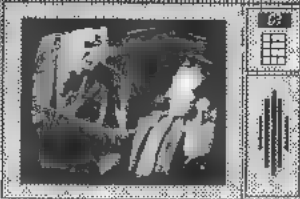
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SCREEN...



and Screen AGAIN!



The Latest on Laser by Sean Farrell

I mentioned in last issue's column that the release of Tim Burton's biopic *ED WOOD* (1994) has sparked renewed interest in the Angora Auteur, who directed (a loose term, at best) such "classics" as *BRIDE OF THE MONSTER* (1955) and *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* (1959). Well, apparently, Eddie isn't the only recipient of this newfound fame. Bela Lugosi, Wood's favorite leading man, is also enjoying a revival of sorts on laser. There are now no less than three new laserdisc sets—five films in all—starring Lugosi. Therefore, in honor of the great horror star (and to celebrate Martin Landau's well-deserved Oscar win for playing Lugosi in Burton's film), I'm devoting a large chunk of this column to The Best of Bela.

WHITE ZOMBIE
The Roan Group RGL9501
Side 1 CAV; Side 2 CLV
\$39.95

Produced for just \$50,000, *WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932) used standing sets from Universal's *DRACULA* (1931) and *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931) to tell a compelling horror story set in the tropics. Madeline (Madge Bellamy) and Neil (John Harron) are two lovebirds about to marry on an island paradise that just happens to be thriving with the walking dead, all created by zombie master Murder

Legendre (Bela Lugosi, in a particularly creepy performance). Beaumont (Robert Frazer), a close friend of the couple, is also a secret admirer of Madeline. Unable to win her affection, Beaumont goes to Legendre for help—and before you know it, Madeline starts walking around with that familiar thousand-yard stare.

According to the jacket notes, this disc is taken from two 35mm prints that were struck in the 1950s. The result is the cleanest picture of *WHITE ZOMBIE* that I've ever seen. Granted, there are some scratches here and there, but overall the disc is a vast improvement over the grainy dups that confront most fans seeking the film.

Having said this, I must add that there are still a number of missing

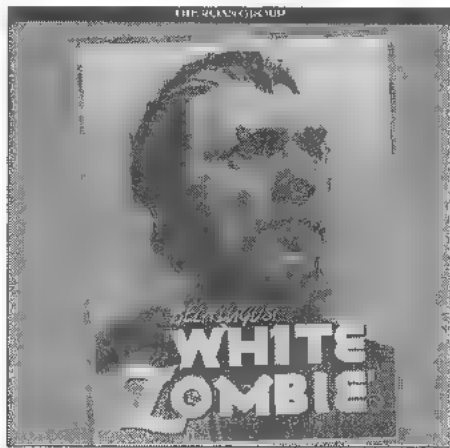
frames from a few scenes. The worst case occurs in Chapter 16, when Neil and Dr. Bruner (Joseph Cawthorn) begin their quest. The constant jump cuts make this scene hard to sit through. Although generally loud and clear, the sound is muffled in several places—but, considering that *WHITE ZOMBIE* was an early talkie, and that it did not have the backing of a major studio, some minor distortion is forgivable. The side break is well chosen, coming at a natural fade to black after Madeline's funeral. Side Two begins with an elegant fade-in to a despondent Neil boozing it up at a bar.

Surprisingly, the Roan Group has placed the CAV feature on Side One instead of Side Two, as is the case with most films running over an hour. The trailer for *WHITE ZOMBIE* leads off the program. There are 20 chapter breaks in all.

Letterboxed at a ratio of 1.33, the black bars at the top and bottom are a minimal on-screen presence; the result is a well-centered picture. Included with the laserdisc is an assortment of goodies: an attractive booklet (well-written by Gary Don Rhodes) that details the behind-the-scenes history of *WHITE ZOMBIE*, and a replica of the exhibitor's campaign book. It's clear that the folks at the Roan Group think the world of *WHITE ZOMBIE*, and the end result is well worth the effort. I'm eagerly looking forward to the Roan Group's next project.

THE BELA LUGOSI COLLECTION:
DEVIL BAT & SCARED TO DEATH
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Here's Bela times two. In *THE DEVIL BAT* (1940), we find Bela starring as Paul Carruthers, a kindly small-town doctor—who just happens to raise giant killer bats as a hobby. When his employers, the owners of a cosmetics company, cheat him out of his share of their profits, Bela seeks revenge by giving his victims a special after-shave that drives his bats bats with bloodlust. The unwary recipient is hunted down and killed just as soon as Bela releases his lo-tion-loathing bat. Yes, it may sound corny, but *THE DEVIL BAT*, thanks to Bela, is great fun. (Just listen to the way Lugosi solemnly intones





"goodbye" to his victims after presenting them with the aftershave.)

Although it suffers from those annoying little specks, the disc's picture is pretty good. There are some scratches, especially at the beginning. The sound is crisp and clear for the most part, but it drops out somewhat in Chapter Nine, when Bela pays a call on his boss, Henry Morton (Guy Usher). There are 12 chapter breaks, spread out over two CLV discs.

The well-placed side break comes with a fast fade to black just as the hero (Dave O'Brien) dashes off to "do a little bat hunting." It's a shame that the second side of the film isn't in CAV—but then, there's not much there that would warrant a frame-by-frame review, anyway. It's Bela's enjoyable performance, as well as that big rubber bat screeching through the night, that gives this film its low-budget charm.

SCARED TO DEATH (1946), the second film in this set, is famous strictly for being Lugosi's only color movie. That's pretty much the only thing about the film that I can recommend. Although it is technically competent, SCARED TO DEATH's story is about as silly as any of Ed Wood's epics, and not nearly as much fun. In addition to being narrated by a corpse, the picture features a death mask floating around for no apparent reason, and a guy in drag shows up. I can't help but wonder if SCARED TO DEATH was a cinematic foreshadowing of

Bela's later years with Wood. (Where's Criswell when you need him to explain this stuff?)

SCARED TO DEATH was shot in Cinecolor. Much cheaper than Technicolor, Cinecolor was a two-color format that used only blue and red; green is nowhere to be seen. (Apparently, the filmmakers forgot this little fact, because they have characters refer to the floating death mask as being green—when, in fact, it actually looks blue.) Picture quality is fuzzy in some scenes, but I suspect this might be the print source, which is also very scratchy (but not especially noticeable because of the unusual color process).

Although there is the occasional snap, crackle, and pop of surface noise, the soundtrack is audible. The side break comes with a quick fade to black once the reporter (Douglas Fowley), seeing Bela baying at the moon, says "C'mon" to the bland hero (Rand Varno). (The fade appears to have been added by Lumivision.) There are 23 chapter breaks overall. Side Four is in CAV, so that the brave among you can examine these strange proceedings frame by frightful frame. SCARED TO DEATH's original trailer is also included on this side.

The liner notes claim that the cape Lugosi wears in this flick is the same one he sported in DRACULA, and we can see here that the lining is a lush red. Bela's eyes were blue. Buddy Barnett, publisher of *Cult Movies* and *Video Magazine*, provides the knowledgeable notes, plus cast and credits of both films. The infamous "Dr. Ackula" himself, Forrest J Ackerman, contributes a brief essay on the joys of seeing Bela in color. Together, THE DEVIL BAT and SCARED TO DEATH make for an entertainingly lurid Lugosi evening.

MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE & ISLAND OF LOST SOULS

CLV—Side 1, side 3

CAV—Side 2, side 4

MCA/Universal Home Video 42297
\$59.98

The final laserdisc set in our Bela Lugosi Film Festival is the latest in Universal's excellent ENCORE EDITION series, wherein they match up two classic horror movies as a double feature. Two adaptations of a pair of famous authors share the bill this time: Edgar Allan Poe's MURDERS

IN THE RUE MORGUE (1932) and ISLAND OF LOST SOULS (1933), based on the novella *The Island of Dr. Moreau* by H. G. Wells (who reportedly hated the film).

For those who only know Lugosi as the washed-up ham of his latter years, this set reminds us of his glory days. Not only do we see him here at his best, but the trailers for both RUE MORGUE and LOST SOULS—including after their respective movies—play up the fact that Bela "Dracula" Lugosi (as he is billed) is a man with star power.

Published in 1841, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" is widely considered to be the first detective story. Ninety years later, it was filmed by Universal as a star vehicle for Lu-



gosi, then fresh from his success in the title role of DRACULA. Taking only the title and a few story elements from Poe, director Robert Florey crafted a simple but effective tale of a mad scientist (Lugosi) who tours carnival sideshows with his captive ape, Erick, in 1845 Paris. Seeking to further the cause of evolution, the "good" doctor conducts grisly experiments on abducted women, hoping to find the right gal for his hairy pal.

Marred somewhat by scratches, RUE MORGUE still looks bright and clear, except for a few moments (especially during Chapter Three) when the picture is very grainy. The sound, however, is marvelous throughout. The break on Side One is well chosen, coming just after Bela instructs Erick to kidnap the film's heroine (played by Sidney

Fox, though a young Bette Davis was considered, then rejected, for the role). The fade to black looks added, but it works nicely.

According to the liner notes, Florey was heavily influenced by *THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI* (1919). You can judge for yourself by using the CAV function on Side Two to study in detail Florey's deft use of light and shadows. There are 26 chapter breaks.

Although Lugosi turns up in a memorable supporting role as the Sayer of the Law, *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS* is really a showcase for Charles Laughton. As the fiendish Dr. Moreau, Laughton is simply unforgettable in this classic film. An obsessed Moreau performs bizarre experiments on a small South Seas island, creating from wild animals a race of half-human creatures—as well as developing a rather nasty case of arrogance. "Do you know what it means to feel like God?" he asks Parker (Richard Arlen), the film's hero (who's as dull as a butter knife). Stylishly directed by Erle C. Kenton, *ISLAND OF THE LOST SOULS* still packs a powerful punch more than 60 years after it first hit the screen.

Unfortunately, the print used for this transfer is not the best. The picture is marred by a scratchy, faded look, and frames are missing from certain scenes, such as during the confrontation between Parker and Moreau in Chapter 17. Several of Parker's lines are missing as a result of these jarring cuts. The disc is encoded in the standard digital CX audio, but the soundtrack is sometimes muffled, and suffers from an occasional sharp drop in volume. Still, these are only minor annoyances once the viewer becomes involved in this timeless classic.

The side break in *LOST SOULS* is perfectly timed, coming after a natural fade-out as the Panther Woman (Kathleen Burke) cowers in fear before Moreau. The CAV function on Side Four offers viewers the chance to examine in better detail the makeup effects on the "manimals," the handiwork of effects supervisor Wally Westmore. Even in this age of astounding F/X magic, the creatures populating Moreau's dark isle manage to fascinate.

LOST SOULS, slightly longer than *MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE*, has 28 chapter breaks.

Handsomely packaged, with extensive and highly informative liner notes, the **ENCORE EDITION** of *RUE MORGUE/LOST SOULS* is recommended not only to fans of Lugosi and Laughton, but also to anyone who admires great filmmaking. To paraphrase Lugosi as the Sayer of the Law: "Are we not film buffs?"

THE INVISIBLE COLLECTION

MCA/Universal 42299

Side 1, 2, 3, and 4 CLV

\$99.98

When I was a kid, I thought it would be cool to be invisible. Think of all the fun stuff you could get away with because nobody could see you. Well, for those of you who, like me, have never quite let go of that fantasy, MCA/Universal has collected more than five hours of transparent mayhem in a marvelous boxed set called **THE INVISIBLE COLLECTION**.



In *THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS* (1940), the first of four "see-through" films, Vincent Price stars as Sir Geoffrey Radcliffe, an innocent man framed for murder and sentenced to die. Dr. Frank Griffin (John Sutton), the brother of the original Invisible One, gives Radcliffe the invisibility drug as a way to clear himself—in more ways than one. But Radcliffe must find the real killer before the effects of the drug drive him mad. Vincent Price does a wonderful job in a challenging role that is, for the most part, a voice over performance.

THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS was taken from the best print available—which is a nice way of saying that there are many scratches, although they aren't so bad that they detract from the story. The picture jumps slightly during Chapter 14, and the soundtrack has some pops here and there, but, generally, it is

good. Ironically with the sharper picture that laserdiscs offer, the viewer can easily spot the wires attached to the various props "picked up" by the Invisible Man.

Oddly, MCA/Universal has placed *THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE* (1944) right after the first film in this set—despite the fact that there were two other invisible films made before it.

Be that as it may, *THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE* is a fast-paced, entertaining thriller that is quite divorced from the previous films. Robert Griffin (Jon Hall) returns to England to confront Sir Jasper and Lady Irene Herrick (Lester Matthews and Gale Sondergaard). Griffin demands his fair share of the South African diamond mine in which they are all partners.

When the Harricks have Griffin thrown out, he seeks shelter with Dr. Drury (John Carradine), a scientist who just happens to be working on (surprise!) an invisibility drug. Drury is only too happy to make a willing Griffin disappear. Rendered transparent, Griffin sets out to exact revenge on the Herricks.

THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE starts at Chapter 31 on Side Two, and it is well served with a high-quality picture and sound. You will find no major scratches here. The side break occurs on a natural fade in chapter 41 after Griffin walks out on Dr. Drury.

INVISIBLE AGENT (1942) is the only film in the series that turns the Invisible Man into a true blue superhero. It's also less solemn and scary than the first two movies in this set, trading the horror elements for action and adventure. Jon Hall plays the grandson of the original Invisible One. He leads a humble existence until secret agents of the Axis powers (Peter Lorre and Cedric Hardwicke) storm into his print shop, demanding that he turn over the family drug to them. Narrowly escaping, Griffin agrees to use his invisibility to fight on the side of the Allies. While the PC crowd may shudder when Griffin says "I can't tell you Japs apart" to the Hungarian Lorre and his henchmen, keep in mind that this was made during World War II. Better a few slurs than having films censored for modern-day sensibilities.

Again, the picture and sound are excellent—no complaints from me. I

would have liked to have seen the climax in CAV, for it makes extensive use of some incredible miniatures of a German air base. Still, *INVISIBLE AGENT* is a great deal of fun, thanks to Lorre and Hardwicke, whose wicked performances lend it a genuine sense of danger.

The final film in the collection, *THE INVISIBLE WOMAN* (1940), is an all-out comedy. According to the liner notes, Margaret Sullivan, contractually bound to appear in a Universal movie, was chosen for the lead. When she balked, Virginia Bruce got the part. However, the real star of the film is John Barrymore as Professor Gibbs, who is a comic wonder. Gibbs makes people invisible by using a machine that looks like a prop reject from a Frankenstein movie. After experimenting on his cat, the Prof places a classified ad for a human volunteer. Kitty Carol (Bruce) answers the ad, eager for adventure. Unfortunately, the ad also attracts the attention of a mob boss (Oscar Homolka), who orders his goons (including Shemp Howard and Donald McBride) to check it out.

With the exception of a few faint scratches, *THE INVISIBLE WOMAN* is a looker. The sound is excellent. Starting at Chapter 30 on Side 5, the opening titles are windowboxed, but the rest of the film is presented in full screen.

Packaged in a handsome box with fascinating liner notes by veteran horror scribe Tom Weaver, *THE INVISIBLE COLLECTION* is a must for genre fans. Get it before it vanishes from the stores!

DEEP DOWN

Image Entertainment ID30921P
Side 1 CLV; Side 2 CAV
\$39.99

Former *CHARLIE ANGELS* star Tanya Roberts has carved a nude niche for herself in steamy erotic thrillers with titillating titles. In *DEEP DOWN*, her latest excursion into very soft porn, Roberts plays a sexpot apartment complex tenant who likes to go skinny dipping at midnight. Struggling musician Andy (Chris Young, too modest an actor for this revealing genre) moves into the complex and promptly falls for his scantily-clad neighbor. But there's a big catch: The sexpot is married to a crackpot—Gil (George

Segal), a low-life loony who has the habit of killing people for the slightest reason.

Although this may sound like the standard "straight to video" fare, *DEEP DOWN* does offer a nifty plot



twist that caught me off guard. And George Segal is surprisingly good as a psychotic killer.

DEEP DOWN is brand new, so both the picture and sound are excellent. The image is presented in a pan-and-scan format, but that's no loss; this movie was shot for video, anyway. Regardless of the absence of chapter titles on the laserdisc jacket, there are chapter stops—20 in all. Side Two is in CAV, but the sex scenes—the only thing in this film that viewers will want to examine frame by frame—are on Side One in CLV. Oh, well, maybe they'll wise up when Tanya makes the sequel. *EVEN DEEPER DOWN*...

HORROR HOTEL

Elite Entertainment EE0818
Side 1 CLV; Side 2 CAV
\$39.95

I must have been about seven years old when I first saw *HORROR HOTEL* (1960). My cousin was staying over at my house that night, and I remember the both of us hiding behind the bed, peering wide-eyed over the top, as this black-and-white shocker unspooled on my little TV set. We both shut our eyes during the frightening climax, only to argue later about who actually saw what happened.

I couldn't help but smile when I read the laserdisc liner notes by Elite Entertainment's president, Vinni Bancalari. It appears that Bancalari, too, discovered *HORROR HOTEL* as a child on TV, just a few

years before I did. Thankfully, Bancalari and the folks at Elite have revived those spooky old memories for a new generation by releasing *HORROR HOTEL* on disc, and it has never looked better.

Christopher Lee and Patricia Jessel star as the leaders of a present day (1960s) coven of witches in a small New England town with a history of black magic. Essentially, they are merely practicing their own form of worship—which happens to require a human sacrifice or two during a holiday known as Candlemass. Along comes Nan Barlow (Venetia Stevenson), a young college student researching witchcraft for a term paper, and the fun begins. To give much more of the plot away would spoil the shocks, but let me say that *HORROR HOTEL* holds up beautifully; after more than 20 years, I still felt a chill or two run up my spine watching it.

Elite has released the original widescreen version of *HORROR HOTEL*. There is no figure listed on the jacket, but the aspect ratio looks to be 1.85:1. In any case, it's a pleasure to finally see director John Moxey's original camera compositions. The picture, though marred by the occasional scratch, is crisp and clean. The CX encoded sound is clear and relatively free of noise. There are 46 chapter stops, with some chapters titles quoting the film's dialogue (such as Chapter 28's "Another day... and tomorrow... the Witches' Sabbath."). The side break after Chapter 30 is well chosen, with the screen going black just as Nan's boyfriend (Tom Naylor) collapses after his car crash.

Speaking of Nan's boyfriend: A note on the disc jacket points out that, although he goes by the name of Bill Maitland in the film, the closing credits list the character as Tom Maitland. While Elite doesn't offer any explanation, they refer to him in the chapter listing as "Bill."

It would have been nice had the liner notes included more extensive behind-the-scenes info, but the personal touch by Bancalari struck a cord with me—as it will with all fans of *HORROR HOTEL*. At last we can watch an excellent copy of this neglected classic—while hiding out during the Witches' Sabbath.

See you next issue...

FROM THE INNER MIND TO

THE OUTER LIMITS

by Ken Schachtman

"There is nothing wrong with your television. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. We are now controlling the transmission. We control the horizontal and the vertical. We can deluge you with a thousand channels or expand one single image to crystal clarity and beyond. We can shape your vision to anything our imagination can conceive. We will control all that you see and hear. You are about to experience the awe and mystery which reaches from the deepest inner mind to THE OUTER LIMITS.

—The Control Voice

What becomes a legend most? Perhaps a resurrection, which is what the Showtime cable station has accomplished. The new OUTER LIMITS is presently scheduled for a run of 43 episodes, only six less than the original series. Pen Densham, Richard B. Lewis, and John K. Watson serve as executive producers. Trilogy Entertainment, their company, and Atlantis Films Limited have formed a joint venture to produce the series for Showtime, which continues production in Vancouver, the city that also hosts the filming of THE X-FILES, and that would seem to be in the running to be the new Capital of Gothic. THE OUTER LIMITS is distributed by the MGM Worldwide Television Group.

But why revive this series, which, lasting less than two full seasons, never really grabbed the ratings, and was replaced by THE KING FAMILY? (Remember them?) The answer lies partly in the fact that THE OUTER LIMITS never really died, being constantly seen in reruns. Also, like STAR TREK, it is that dreadfully overused catchword, a "classic."

In a world of devalued words, in which the term "classic" is applied to any music, movie, or TV show that was created before 1990, THE OUTER LIMITS stands out like an original Thunderbird in a horde of minivans. What is it that separates a true classic from the also-rans? Original concepts, a risk-taking attitude, great acting, wonderful scripts? Well, if truth be told, too many of the original episodes harked back to the '50s monster movie concept of "There are some things that man is not meant to know, tamper with, discover, etc." The acting, with a few exceptions (notably, Robert Culp in "Demon With a Glass Hand"), often took second place to the monster of the week, and the scripts were sometimes as threadbare and holey as an old sock. But THE OUTER LIMITS was nonetheless an original, the first attempt to create something that resembled adult science fiction on TV. Its Gothic overtones, film-noir lighting, and challenging camera angles gave it a look that was unique in television.

True classics are also composed of two seemingly contradictory themes, the timeless and the timebound, informing us of attitudes and outlooks we have left behind us. Lucille Ball's chocolate-assembly-line scene in I LOVE LUCY is pure timeless hilarity, yet it is predicated on the '50s gospel that a woman's place was in the home. THE DICK VANDYKE SHOW is an immortal gem of ensemble comedy, but it is also a perfect example of what America wanted middle-class suburban life to be like at that time. THE TWILIGHT ZONE is timeless because all fantasy is timeless, often supplying easy answers to complex problems. (The world is in a terrible mess because someone has literally let the devil loose; abused or neglected children can dive to the bottom of a pool and surface in a bucolic swimming hole with a kindly

mother figure there to care for them.) Such simple solutions, however, firmly root the program in the '60s, a time when anything, for better or worse, seemed possible, before all the easy answers were used up.

THE OUTER LIMITS still mostly works as sci-fi, but it is also an exemplar of cold war paranoia. Unlike the later STAR TREK, which was, despite its moralistic tones, quite optimistic, THE OUTER LIMITS was based on a free-floating anxiety—the enemy is out there, somewhere, even if the enemy is us. In fact, the show it most resembles today is THE X-FILES, in both tone and outlook. It seems we've created a bridge between the sick '60s and the nervous '90s. That bridge is fear. If the new OUTER LIMITS resonates in the same style, it will definitely find a home.

"Sandkings," the two-hour premiere episode, boasts the talents of three generations of the Bridges clan—Lloyd (television's original SEA HUNT), Beau (1989's THE FABULOUS BAKER BOYS), and Beau's son, Dylan—and costars Helen Shaver (1985's DESERT HEARTS) as the middle Bridges' wife. It is based on a Nebula and Hugo award-winning short story by George R. R. Martin, scripted by Melinda Snodgrass, former story editor for STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, and directed by Stuart Gillard, who wrote and produced the critically acclaimed IF YOU COULD SEE WHAT I HEAR (1982).

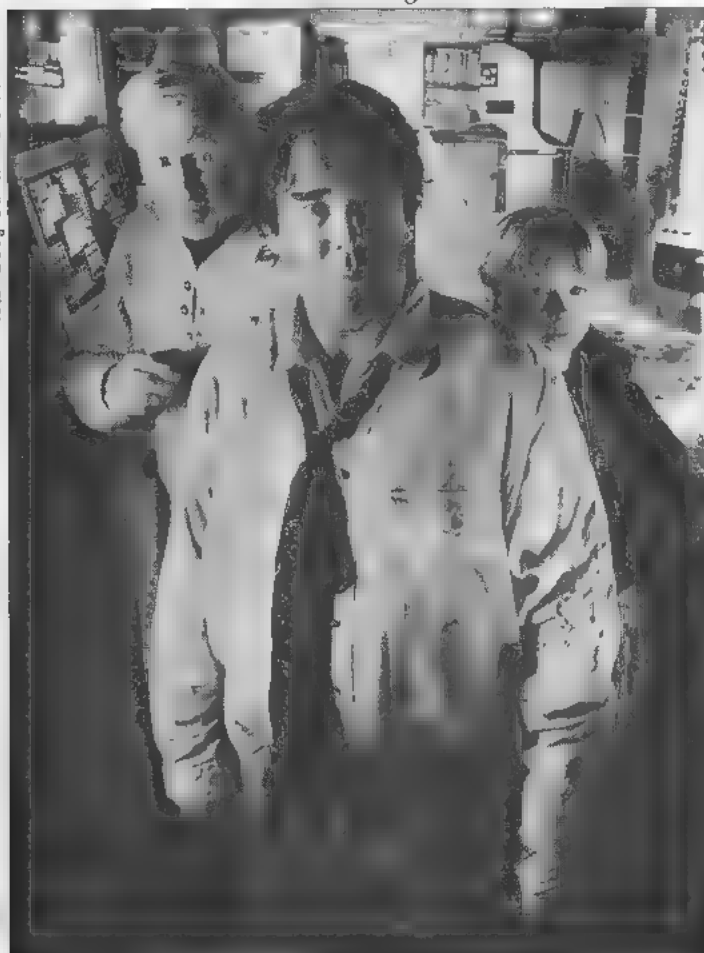
The story is an appropriate one for an OUTER LIMITS episode, with Beau playing a scientist obsessed with tiny, dormant eggs brought back from the Red Planet

Mars. As his monomania slips into megalomania, he endangers his family and finally the whole world—yet his motives remain distressingly human. After all, how many of us, if tempted, could refrain from becoming a god? Those viewers who have a thing about creepy crawlies will get a real bang out of this one. The tension between Lloyd and Beau as an estranged father and son is quite believable, as is Shaver's depiction of a worried and finally frantic spouse. Dylan acquits himself well in his first featured role. Also praiseworthy is Kim Coates' portrayal of an officious bureaucrat who almost deserves to be eaten alive—which is precisely what happens to him. And one mustn't forget the omniscient Control Voice, so startling in the '60s, so expected and almost homey now.

"Valerie 23" stars William Sadler (1994's THE SHAW-SHANK REDEMPTION) as Frank Hellner, a lonely paraplegic scientist who agrees to test a new robotic home companion that can "feel" emotions and simulate all human behavior. His attempt to treat her like a kind of toaster with a voice is sabotaged by Sofia Shinas (1994's THE CROW) as Valerie, most amusingly in a scene in which she confronts him bare-breasted. (Well, we can't let Batman entirely corner the nipple market, can we?) When Valerie becomes jealous of Frank's attachment to his physiotherapist, Rachel Rose, played by Nancy Allen (1980's DRESSED TO KILL), the dangers of owning a temptress who can crush a Volkswagen with one hand become all too apparent.

LEFT: Three generations of Bridges (father Lloyd, son Beau, and grandson Dylan) starred in "Sandkings," the pilot episode of the new OUTER LIMITS. TOP RIGHT: An otherworldly sandking puts in an appearance. BOTTOM RIGHT: The sandkings use their talents for building sand castles to show Beau what's in store for him.

Photo: Doug Curran © SHOWT ME





Thus far, "I, Robot" is the only episode from the original series to be remade for Showtime. Leonard ("Now I'm really not Spock") Nimoy, who had a role in the 1964 production, returns for the remake under the direction of his son, Adam. "I, Robot" is based on a series of short stories by Otto Binder, who wrote many of the classic Captain Marvel comic-book tales.

"Blood Brothers," the last episode available to this reviewer, concerns the problems inherent in a practical immortality drug. A scientist (is there a trend developing here?) played by Charles Martin Smith (1987's *THE UNTOUCHABLES*), discovers a vaccine that cures all illness by making the immune system indestructible. He sees it as a great boon to mankind, while his businessman brother, acted by Martin Kemp (1990's *THE KRAYS*), sees it as the Grail of ultimate power. Both of them are horribly wrong.

The new *OUTER LIMITS* is following the original's penchant for fine casting. Upcoming episodes include such talent as Len Cariou, Rebecca DeMornay, Michael Dorn, John Heard, Annette O'Toole, Bruce Davison, William Hickey, Chris Sarandon, Frances Sternhagen, and David Warner. Leonard Nimoy will star in the only remake episode from the original series, "I Robot," directed by his son, Adam. Thus we come full circle, as Nimoy appeared in the original production. There is every reason to believe that, with this roster of acting talent, strong stories, and the creative production values that have been so far shown, the new *OUTER LIMITS* could more than double the run of the original.

"We now return control of *Scarlet Street* to . . ."



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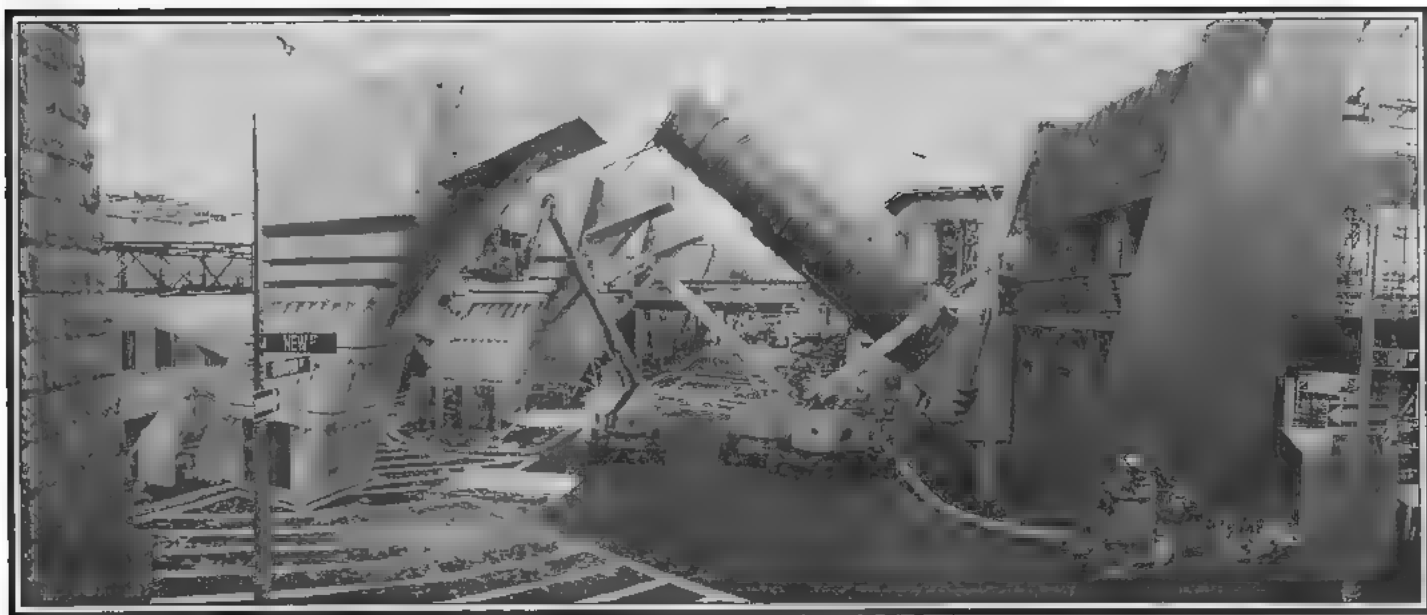
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A Town Without Pity

JUDGE DREDD

takes a bite out of Mega City

by Buddy Scalera and Danny Savello

There's an ominous roar as the motorcycle speeds across the screen. This is a big bike in a mean city. Of course, it's also Hollywood, so the bike is a fake, as is the city. Get ready for JUDGE DREDD!

It's hard to tell who had the most exciting job on the (literally) explosive summer blockbuster JUDGE DREDD. Most of the mainstream entertainment press will likely focus on the experiences of the marquee talents involved, which include Sylvester Stallone and Armand Assante.

On the other hand, it could be Nigel Phelps, who was commissioned as production designer to construct Mega-City One. In the 22nd century, when the movie takes place, life in the big city takes on new meaning. We're talking big, big city here, and the responsibility for making it suitably breathtaking was in Phelps' hands alone.

Then again, the honor of holding the most exciting job may fall to Joss Williams, the stunt coordinator. Phelps built the city, but Williams got to blow it up.

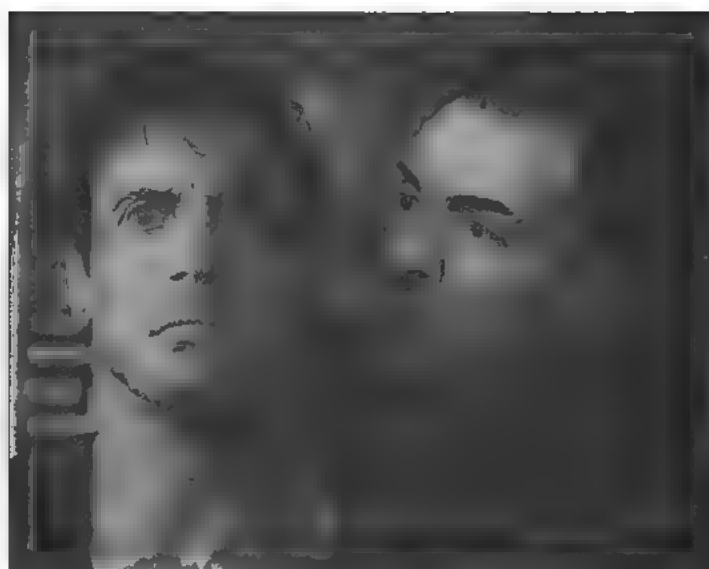
Cycles, cars, skyscrapers—Phelps built them, Williams wasted them. All in a day's work, they say. That's what makes Hollywood Hollywood.

JUDGE DREDD is based on the character created by John Wagner and Alan Grant in the pages of the popular British comic book series *2000 AD*: The comic is a witty combination of black comedy and political commentary, targeting authoritarian government.

In the film version, Sylvester Stallone plays the title role of Judge Dredd, the most feared cop in Mega-City One. His *Dirty Harry*-style technique is swift and deadly. He's considered, in this age when a man in his profession is cop, judge, and (more often than not) executioner, the "perfect lawman."

Of course, judges like Dredd can only thrive in cities like Mega-City One. And that's where Nigel Phelps came in.

"There's been a series of ecological disasters and wars; there have been these robot wars. Basically, most of the planet is sort of black, desolate landscape . . . all wiped out," Phelps says of this world of tomorrow. "So we went to Iceland to shoot those things. Black devastation. And, you know, the focal point in our story is Mega-City One, which is New York. Using that as a starting point, we then started to elaborate on that fact. 'Well, the population has expanded'—how can we



LEFT: JUDGE DREDD joins Batman and Robin in celebrating the Year of the Exaggerated Crotch. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Armand Assante can't convince Sylvester Stallone that he's supposed to wear a helmet throughout the film. **BELOW RIGHT:** Stallone asks director Danny Cannon about this "helmet thing."

make this a feasible, futuristic city that isn't stupid? That there's still some logic to it?"

Of course, they wouldn't have had to worry about that if they'd based Mega-City One on Washington instead of New York.

Creating a city of the future is a tricky task. What makes sense today, may seem silly a few years from now. Moviegoers and sci-fi aficionados are more sophisticated than when they first saw *METROPOLIS* (1926) or *THE TIME MACHINE* (1960). They demand that set designers fashion consistent, logical futures.

Phelps pushed for that sort of credibility. "What we tried to do, which was a first, was to expand a lot of the views of Mega-City One, which is sort of like this medieval walled city in the future that has grown beyond anyone's imagination. It's grown vertically as opposed to laterally, and so we have this city which, over the centuries, has one layer on top of another."

Phelps achieved the claustrophobic feel of the city with a combination of miniatures, computer-generated buildings, and vehicles. As faithful readers of *2000 AD* know, the judges tool around on obnoxiously large motorcycles (There hasn't been so impressive a hog in Hollywood since Porky retired!)

One of the key elements in creating a feasible set is attention to detail. Films such as *STAR WARS* (1977)

and *BLADE RUNNER* (1982) owe a large part of their success to superior set design. Phelps was concerned with the smallest details, but also realized that it's easy to go overboard. "There's just so much stuff! It's ridiculous! There are all the guns; there's like eight or nine different guns, and they're all practical firers. Then there are the robots... these sort of androids, these biomechanical robots. You start to question where it begins and ends. You know, once you start getting into it, it's incredible because there's just so much. Basically, you want to try to design everything—the furniture, the hardware—but where do you stop? It's tremendous!"

Naturally, with 12 months of careful preproduction for Mega-City One, the next logical step was to figure out how to destroy it. Cinergi Pictures brought in the explosive experience of special effects supervisor Joss Williams, whose past work includes stints on *SUPERMAN* (1978), *INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE* (1989), *PATRIOT GAMES* (1992), and *ALIEN III* (1993), among many other genre giants.

Needless to say, there's considerably more to special effects than things that go boom in the night. Williams provided physical and mechanical effects, including general atmospheric effects. He was part of the team that designed the motorcycles and flying ve-

hicles for the judges. His job was every bit as detail intensive as was Phelps'.

"I have to familiarize myself with the entire script really," says Williams, "because, if you don't, what you find happens is that the smallest little effect of a window opening with a breeze blowing through it, or sheets of paper blowing off a desk—effects that you've sort of skimmed over because they really read as an insignificant thing—are the sort of things for which you get caught with your trousers down."

Of course, Williams did blow things up. Lots of things. But pyrotechnic effects can be extremely dangerous, and Williams was also responsible for the safety of the cast and crew.

"I've been in a position on the floor with people in authority above me in the effects department," explains Williams. "They'd be pressured into going for a shot when you know what they should have done is said, 'No, it's not safe. We haven't got enough time. We should do this another day, or come back later, or not do it at all.'"

Williams employed stunt performers for major effects, including one in which "a bank gets blown up by the baddies. That's a full-sized bank frontage, two stories high. We had about 10 or 12 people in front of the bank when it blew up. All stunt performers. It looked

like they were actually in there and getting involved in the accident."

An additional concern of Williams was the safety of Stallone. "If a stunt performer should not be able to carry on the next day, get another one in. If Sly can't carry on the next day, then the movie stops. So the effects involving him were more tense than perhaps the others were. Also, I really wanted to get as much interaction with the artists as possible. Therefore, it meant having to design the effects in a different manner than perhaps you'd have to do normally, to achieve the effects look that you want to get."



"Okay, okay—so I'll wear the lousy helmet!"
Sylvester Stallone is JUDGE DREDD!

react to us and to me. You know, we're a very young crew over here. When I say young, I mean young by years, not by experience."

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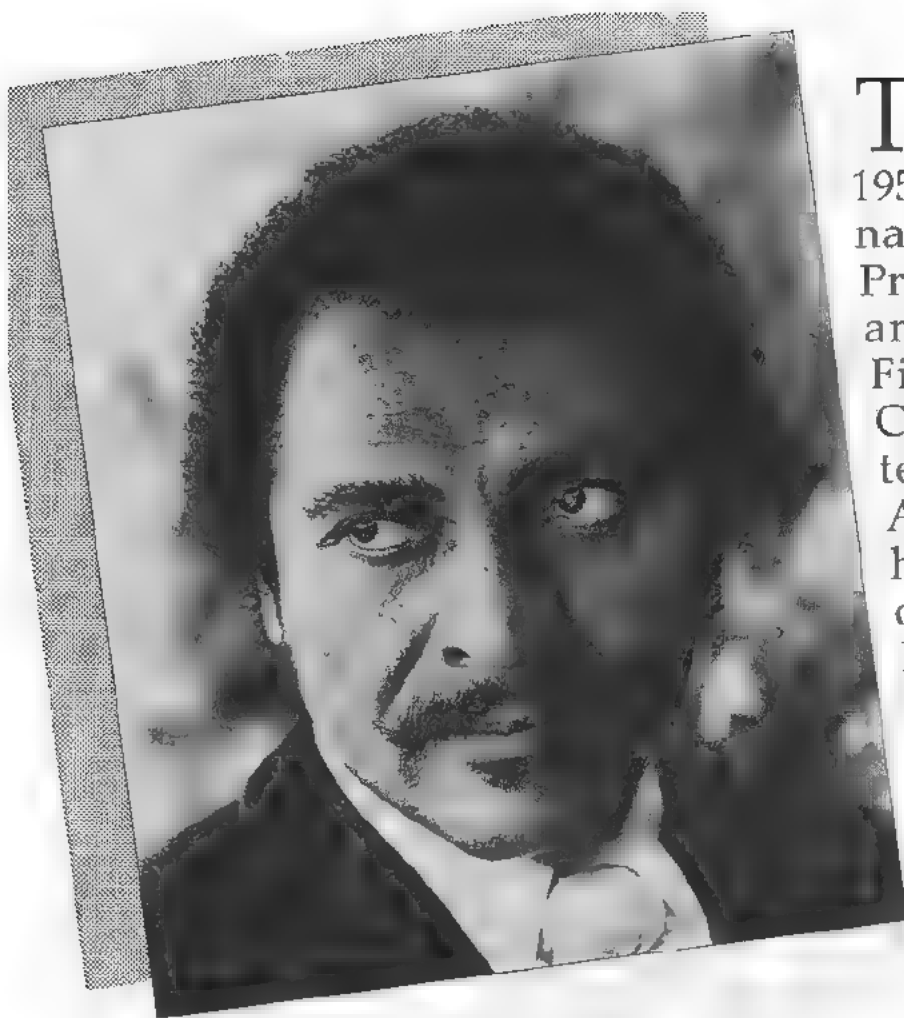
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OF BORIS KARLOFF
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LEFT IMAGE: THE MUMMY
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The lines had been carefully drawn throughout the late 1950s and 1960s: American International Pictures had Vincent Price, Boris Karloff, Peter Lorre, and Basil Rathbone. Hammer Films had Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee. American International Pictures had Edgar Allan Poe and Hammer Films had the classic movie monsters of yesteryear—namely, Baron Frankenstein and his assorted creatures, Kharis the Mummy and his bandaged cronies, the Wolf Man (or, in Hammer's case, the werewolf), the Phantom of the Opera, She Who Must Be Obeyed, and Count Dracula.

Especially Count Dracula.

With the towering Lord of the Undead came a whole creepy cryptful of fanged fiends, including Baron Meinster in *THE BRIDES OF DRACULA* (1960), Count Ravana in *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE* (1964), Carmilla in *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* (1970), and Count Mitterhouse in *VAMPIRE CIRCUS* (1972).

By the early '70s, however, Hammer was running pretty low on plasma, and AIP's Poe series was, with the departure of director Roger Corman, well past its gory glory days. Lee had just about had it with the ever-diminishing role of Dracula. Cushing had all but withdrawn from the world of filmmaking following the death of his beloved wife. Price was making the last of his horror films. Karloff, Lorre, and Rathbone were gone.

BLACULA

VS. YORGA

William Marshall and Robert Quarry

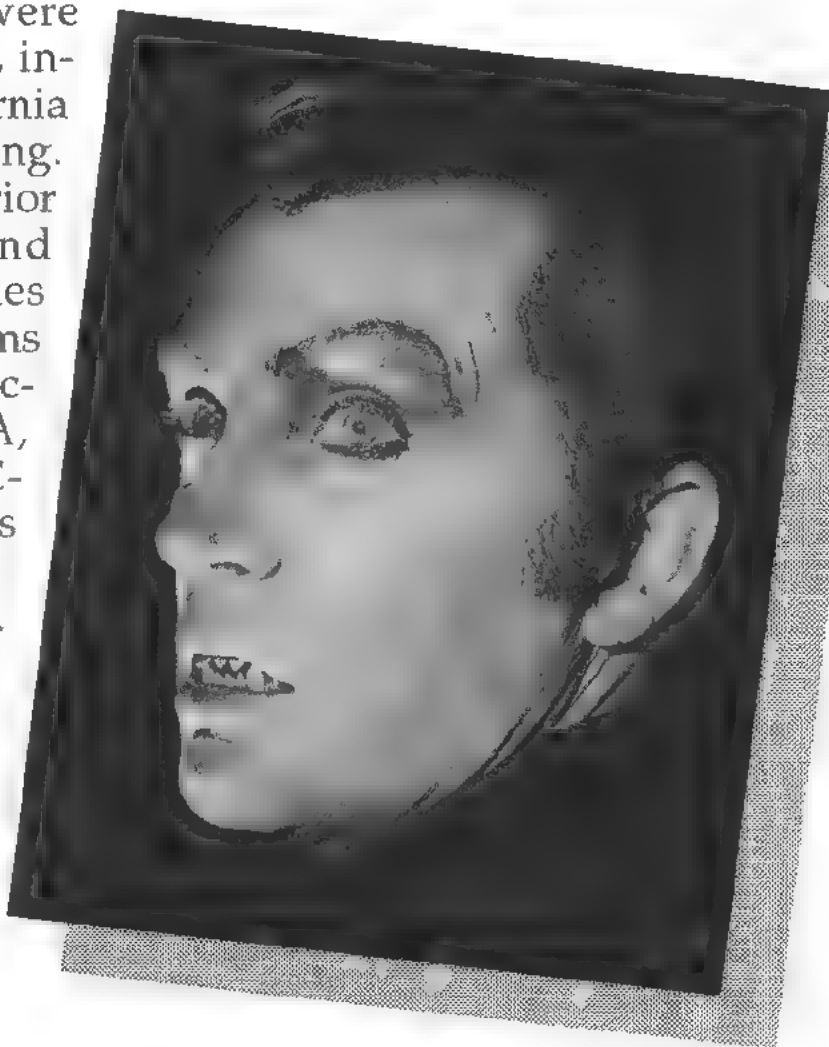
interviewed by Kevin G. Shinnick

And that's when American International pulled an about face and welcomed into its fold two of the cinema's most colorfully vicious blood-suckers: Blacula and Count Yorga. In the process, the company made (however briefly) horror stars of the veteran actors who portrayed these two newly-minted creatures of the night: William Marshall and Robert Quarry.

Unlike the majority of the Hammer horrors, AIP's vamps were modern-day men about town, inhabiting a hippie-filled California that seemed ripe for the sucking. Street-smart hustlers, gay interior decorators, female cabbies, and a string of miniskirted beauties all fell before the deadly charms of the terrible twosome. So successful were COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE (1970) and BLACULA (1972) that both movies spawned sequels.

Abruptly, it was all over. Marshall and Quarry went on to other fright flicks, but they are best remembered for those brief moments when they drove America bats.

Robert Quarry is interviewed on page 44, William Marshall on page 48





PAGES 44 AND 45: A gallery of portraits traces the career of *Scarlet Street* fave Robert Quarry from its early days up to his starring role in American International Pictures' *COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE* (1970)

Robert Quarry: Ask the questions. I will answer truthfully, honestly—and you cut out all four letter words (Laughs)

Scarlet Street: You got it

RQ: Motherfucker is not a four-letter word, so you can keep that in.

SS: Okay. How did you get started in acting?

RQ: I got a job as a bellhop in my home town, Santa Rosa. I took the job because Hitchcock was coming to make a movie called *SHADOW OF A DOUBT*, and I wanted to meet movie people. So I ingratiated myself—I think the word is “pest” and I was put under contract to Universal. That started it and so I never went to college. I was making \$97.50 and, I’ll tell you, in 1942 that was a lot of money for a 15-year-old kid. I owe it all to Hitchcock. 50 years of hell and torture and damnation. I can thank Hitchcock for that

SS: Did you work with him at all?

RQ: I did a little bit in the film in Santa Rosa, which they cut out. That should have forewarned me about my career. I walked up and said hello to Teresa Wright and that was it. That was the end of my career with Hitchcock. But I knew him very well, because his daughter was about my age and we were friends. So I used to see Mr. Hitchcock all the time. He was very strange. A lot of actors didn’t like working with him. Paul Newman really hated him. They were not enchanted.

SS: What came next after *SHADOW OF A DOUBT*?

RQ: Well, I stayed at Universal, but they had so many kids under con-

tract. Donald O’Connor was making musicals, but he got drafted and that left us all with nothing to do. So I did a play called *SPRING GREEN*, and then I started doing radio. I was fortunate, because kids in the 18- to 26-year old voice range had all been drafted. I was 16, with a voice that I could shift, and I was good at dialects, so I made a really good living. By the time I was 18 the war was over, but six months later I got drafted! (Laughs) After the service, I went to New York; I was gonna take New York by storm. It took about two-and-a-half years to get my first New York play—and that was with Katharine Hepburn in *AS YOU LIKE IT*.

SS: How did you support yourself until you got the stage role?

RQ: I was doing television. Of course, nobody wanted to do television in those days, but I did a lot of good shows: *KRAFT*, *PHILCO*, *STUDIO ONE*, all of those. Then MGM put me under contract. Katharine Hepburn arranged the whole thing. She got me the test and Louis B. Mayer put me under contract. Two weeks later he was fired and Dore Schary, who took over, didn’t like me. So I was stuck with that for about six months. Then I went to Fox to do a picture with Clark Gable and Susan Hayward called *SOLDIER OF FORTUNE*, and Gable fired me because I was too young. I was playing Hayward’s husband. Gable tested with me, and I looked all right with him, and I looked all right with her—but when they put the three of us together I looked like their

kid! Gable apologized. He was so nice; he was a darling—and I drove off the lot and thought, “Why, that son of a bitch just fired me! Why am I saying, ‘Oh, what a nice man?’” (Laughs) Then Zanuck put me under contract at Fox, and Buddy Adler came in two weeks later. He didn’t want Zanuck people like Schary didn’t want Mayer people. So you see, I had the distinction of closing two of the biggest studios in Hollywood! Sure enough, when AIP put me under contract years later, that studio went broke! Nicholson left and Arkoff, that idiot, was running it.

SS: We’ll ask about Arkoff later.

RQ: Don’t! That’s when you’ll get the motherfucker phrase! (Laughs) Oh, God! He was a terrible man. He was a mean spirited, great big blowhard. He was the last of the Harry Cohns—you know, that awful “producer .mage” thing. But, he was shrewd. He was smart. Jim Nicholson had the taste, and Sam Arkoff had the business acumen. I know some terrible stories about Sam, he was gross about everything. You could stick your finger down your throat half the time with what he was saying. Anyway, I closed that studio. Don’t put me under contract! You’ll lose your studio!

SS: Did you make any horror films before *COUNT YORGA*?

RQ: No, that was the first—and that was only a joke! I just did the movie as a joke, because some friends were making the movie. They were gonna make a soft porno film out of it. I read the script and said, “Jesus! If you make a straight horror flick



you've got as good a chance of selling that—actually better—as when you've making some dumb little C-minus porno flick." So they went ahead, put in all their money, made that little movie for 64 grand, and it made a fortune! For AIP, it was the third highest-grossing horror film they ever made.

SS: Well, no wonder AIP put you under contract.

RQ: I made it with Bob Kelljan and Mike McCready. At the time, I was shooting this big, wild epic called WUSA, with Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward. I was doing that Monday through Friday and then, on the weekends, we did YORGA. I'd get into makeup and at eight o'clock, when the sun went down, we'd start shooting. At four, when the sun came up, I drove home! (Laughs) So I just thought of this as a joke—then, when I saw the rough cut, I thought, "It's an embarrassing joke." I mean, I really thought it was a piece of crap! When it came out, I got an incredible review from *The New York Times*, 'cause they're not so easy on horror movies. They just did this whole rave; I mean, they liked the movie, but they did this incredible rave for me. Kevin Thomas did the same thing in the *LA Times*. I was getting these great reviews and, of course, my million dollar epic was one of the great bombs. (Laughs) WUSA bombed and YORGA took off! That started me doing horror films—and, strangely, it wrecked my whole career!

SS: Making horror movies?

RQ: Karloff once told me, "You get started and they type you." Boris Karloff was the only great horror-

film star. There weren't so many, just he and Lugosi—and Lugosi, dear man that he was, couldn't act his way out of a Yugoslavian paper bag! But Karloff was right. I quit the business for about eight years, 'til Fred Olen Ray got me back working, and now the kids in the business think, "Robert Quarry? Count Yorga? Well, he's weird. Strange"—like you have to be strange to play those parts. All the theater work I'd done, which was pretty damned good, was forgotten. I was one of the few actors in America who got a Ford Foundation Grant to go around to regional theaters, the good ones. I opened the New Arena Stage in Washington and Dr. Guffy's Theater in Minneapolis, and I came back to town with the greatest reviews you ever saw in your life. Well, I walked into the first producer's office and he said to me, "Bob! Where have you been?" And I started to say, "Well, I was on a Ford..." He said, "You've been selling cars?" And I said, "I'm putting the scrap book away. Right now." (Laughs)

SS: And then YORGA typecast you.

RQ: Peter Cushing, a very distinguished actor, got locked in the horror thing. Chris Lee got locked in the horror thing. I mean, we're talking about actors who worked in other things, but the minute you do something bizarre—a vampire, a mummy, a monster of any kind—the minute you do those kind of pictures, you get locked in. With Hollywood, if you buy a dog you're an animal trainer. They have no imagination. So, it really worked against me. I even stopped doing voice work for a long time. Un-

fortunately, it was one of those things where I had to stay away. I wasn't physically able to work.

SS: Because of your car accident?

RQ: Well, I got run over by a car. That crippled me up pretty good. I got over that, and then I had a heart attack. So that took a year out. Then I started back to work, and I got beaten and left for dead in my parking lot at home. Some guys mugged me for \$27 in cash. They didn't steal the car, they didn't take my wallet, they took \$27 in cash! Fred is the one who got me back to work. I mean, he actually wrote me a part where I was in a wheelchair, 'cause I couldn't walk. I'd just had my knees operated on. They broke my kneecaps.

SS: My God!

RQ: Unfortunately, it was... I don't mean to sound racist, but the two guys were black, and as they were kicking me, they started screaming, "White motherfucker." Their racist rage came out and I paid the penalty for it. It took me about three years to get over that. Well, now, what else do you want to ask? Do I dye my hair? No.

SS: You worked with Vincent Price on *DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN*.

RQ: He was a nice man. Vincent was a lovely guy to work with, and he was a very sweet man in a lot of ways. PHIBES was fun. I got to go over to London for three and a half months. I took a flat there; I just fell in love with that city. If it had been the worst movie I'd ever made and Vincent had been a son of a bitch—which he was not—and the director had been an asshole—which he was not—I still would have loved it. I love that city so.



a check for \$350! They got their \$2 million. I got \$350! I thought, "I oughta tear this up and send it back." Then I thought, "The hell with it I'll take four friends off to Chase's." And that was my bonus. I always thought that was a little cheap.

SS: That's putting it mildly.

RQ: Then Michael had the nerve to say, "Well, we made you a star." And I said, "No. I made your goddamned movie. That movie wasn't anything without me in it." That sounds very conceited, but it's true. That whole movie hinges on me and I'm damned good in it. I used to go to work every day and say, "What am I doing jumping out of the woodwork?"

What am I doing with

these fangs in my face? What am I doing biting ladies on the neck? Well, just forget it. Just go in and do it." Good old Actor's Studio training! "Become a vampire! Get to it!" For years I played villains in so many things. I'd call my parents and tell 'em, "Oh, I'm working on that." And they'd say, "How are they killing you this time?" (Laughs)

SS: What's your approach to playing the bad guy?

RQ: Villains think they're heroes. There are a few actors—pretty good ones—but the minute they start playing the heavy, they telephone it in. Practically twirling the mustaches and saying, "Ha, ha, na! There goes your house!" In YORGA, I told Bob, "I'm not playing Bela Lugosi. I'm not looking like some weirdo. I'm playing a man who believes what he believes. He's his own hero." Villains don't think they're wrong. They go to the chair saying, "I didn't do anything." I've always tried to play them that way, which is sensible. And in this instance it worked. It truly worked with the vampire fangs. Just play him cool. Then I started sneaking in a few humorous things, and Bob loved it and left it in. "We made you a star" For \$350. A little ingratitude there.

SS: Did you make more on the sequel?

RQ: I made a lot more! Not a lot, lot—but a lot more compared to \$1,249! But then I was under contract and every picture I did, the money doubled and kept going up.

SS: Did you base the producer you played in MADHOUSE on Sam Arkoff?

RQ: Subconsciously. In the original script, called DEVIL DAY, Vincent Price and I were going to be doing what Vincent ended up doing with Peter Cushing. So I was hating Sam pretty much anyway, 'cause they'd changed the script totally from what Bob Bloch had written. I was no longer playing the part I was supposed to play, Vincent's rival. They said, "You're too young to play Vincent's peer." So I got the producer part. When you ask if I based it on Sam Arkoff, no, but I did a terrible movie called SEX BOMB. One of the great national disgraces. Only one person has ever seen it, but the character in that I based on Sam Arkoff from the cigar to the terrible language "Get your tits out there!"

SS: It's a comedy horror film, isn't it?

RQ: Well, it's supposed to be. Bomb was the operative word for SEX BOMB! (Laughs) I don't think they ever sold that movie. I don't think it even got out on tape! It was just unbelievable! Linnea Quigley was in it. She turned out to be a darling little girl and here she was playing the SEX BOMB! I remember she had to have the set cleared because she was coming out bare breasted. I said, "I'm not clearing out of here. I'm the star of this fucking movie. She's coming out and I'm gonna sit here and watch it!" And she came out, and I said, "You cleared the set for those two things? For Christ's sake, I could bring a package of fig newtons that looked better!" (Laughs) She just thought that was the most terrific thing. We fell madly in love. I mean, I'd just said this terrible, terrible thing to her, but if you do it with the right attitude—'cause I love to laugh and giggle and I've got a smartass mouth. How's your tape doing?

SS: We're okay. We've jumped around a bit.

RQ: We've jumped all over the place! Let me look at the questions! "Was the character of Khorda in DEATHMASTER inspired by headlines about Charles Manson?" Well, of course it was! "What was your take on the character?" Learn the lines and jump up into the furniture. "Price refused to do a third Phibes film in the '80s. Was that a disappointment?" No. Price was finished. He was no longer under contract. I was the one who was supposed to take over for Vincent, but then the whole studio shifted. "You appeared in SUGAR HILL, a black

SS: What do you think of DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN?

RQ: Actually, that movie was done very well. They spent a lot of money, so it's beautiful looking. Some of the younger English actors were a little resentful. They thought, "Well, this part could be played by an Englishman." I was being paid by an American company; I wasn't taking any money away from England, but they were very snotty. Then, when we worked together, I could see their attitudes change, 'cause I'm a good actor. It doesn't sound very humble, and I'm not great. I'm good. Damned good. So when we started working together, they became very friendly. So it was great. I've had lots of happy experiences making movies, but that one incorporated everything I wanted—travel, and new things, and I was getting a decent salary. That certainly didn't bother me. (Laughs) I only got \$1,250 for making YORGA. It's the only time I ever worked for minimum and I've refused ever since, even with Fred. I say, "Fred, I don't care if it's just 50 bucks more. I will never work for minimum."

SS: When you consider that YORGA was such a hit...

RQ: I think it made something like \$8 million the first week. Of course, Michael and Bob had taken terrible risks. I tried to justify it by saying, "It was their money. If that picture had flopped, they'd have lost their homes and their cars." But they were so grateful that they sent me



PREVIOUS PAGE: Robert Quarry joined Katharine Hepburn in *AS YOU LIKE IT* on the Broadway stage. **LEFT:** Count Yorga (Quarry) meets Sherlock Holmes (Roger Perry) at a costume party. **RIGHT:** Beiderbeck (Quarry) tries to save his wife from a crazed rotisserie in *DR. PHIBES RISES AGAIN* (1972).

exploitation film." I did that because I had a pay or play contract. It was an all-black movie and Sam wasn't gonna pay me if I didn't make a movie. God forbid! So I found myself in Houston, Texas, playing the head of the black Mafia. A good piece of casting. Good old white-bread Quarry here, doing this thing. *SS: We wanted to ask you about Peter Cushing, too.*

RQ: I adored Peter Cushing. The nicest man that ever lived. Ever! Darling, darling, darling guy, really.

SS: Someday we're going to find someone with a nasty comment about Peter Cushing.

RQ: You never will. I mean, he was weird. His wife Helen died about two years before we worked together. He'd go home and set the table for two. It was really sad. But you can't say a thing against Peter.

He was just the kindest, sweetest—I get tears in my eyes when I think about what a sweet man he was.

SS: Let's cover a few more points on the Yorga movies. Your vampire teeth were considerably different from the standard fangs.

RQ: Well, I wanted tops and bottoms, like a bat's teeth, and my dentist said, "Oh, we can do that." So we put these things on and they were damned good teeth. They're in Forry Ackerman's museum.

SS: What can you tell us about your costars on the Yorga films?

RQ: They were all marvelous. Marvelous people. Well, Mariette Hartley hardly ever mentions she was in the sequel. I think she was kind of ashamed she did it. My feeling was, "Listen, Mariette! You haven't worked in a long time!" I asked her to do the film! And she said, "Oh!

That'll be fun!" I've known Mariette for a long time and she was going through some problems. It's no secret, 'cause she works with Alcoholics Anonymous. She's one of the great, funny people in the world. So I told her, "Now, when we get together, you can't make jokes. I have to play this stuff seriously." "Oh, yes, Bob." First scene I had to play, I had to play with the fangs in—and what happens when I have the teeth in is that it's all lisp! So I had this terrible line: "Thoon I will thuck from you veinth the thweet nectar of life! Then we thall be ath one. A lifetime of eternal blith." At which point, Mariette's face was going through these contortions—and I just punched her. (Laughs) We

Continued on page 107

LEFT: Robert Quarry might not survive *SUGAR HILL* (1974) if he keeps shooting in the wrong direction. **RIGHT:** Quarry teamed with the late, great Peter Cushing in *MADHOUSE* (1974).





LEFT: William Marshall arises for a night of bloodsucking in AIP's *BLACULA* (1972). RIGHT: Marshall wasn't entirely satisfied with the final results of *ABBY* (1974).

WILLIAM MARSHALL

Continued from page 43

Scarlet Street: How did someone with such an extensive background in Shakespeare get cast as BLACULA?

William Marshall: Just luck. (Laughs) And height, I guess

SS: Did you consider making a horror film a step down?

WM: No. It would have been a step down had I accepted what was put before me. After making a good study of the script, I realized that I could help it. The character was a layabout. (Laughs) The producers begged me to have a read of it and consider it. I hated the title. I had no love for him or them. I had a chance to read it and I saw ways in which we could turn it into something more significant, working from certain periods in European and American history that had to do

with the kidnapping of African people, and dragging them from their homelands. So I offered a different idea for the character, and they liked it. They gave it some thought, and they didn't seem able to come up with any ideas that were better than mine. (Laughs) He would be a prince in Africa, and his mission was to appeal to those Europeans who had indulged themselves so incredibly in the slave trade.

SS: So that part of the plot was entirely your idea?

WM: This actually did happen. There were European people trying to put an end to the enslavement of all people, but the African people in particular. So the producers liked that idea. They agreed that they would move ahead on it, and admitted that it was head and heels above what they had started with. So

that's how it came to pass. I said, "I will be in charge of the reach and thoughts of the prince, and you go ahead with the monster. Do what you want to do with the monster."

SS: Was it your idea in SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM!, then, to have the prince tell off some pimps who were degrading their people?

WM: How could it have been theirs? That was not on their minds. They're not suffering from it. They fought me on it. It's not often a player has very much power, but I kept insisting—because I knew how many millions, roughly, they had made on the first film. And I made about 75 cents and a sardine sandwich!

SS: That was a catered one, eh?

WM: (Laughs) Yes! I didn't fare that much better on the second film. I must say that they went to work to make sure that I had no further in-

LEFT: *Blacula* (William Marshall) proves that Norma Desmond isn't the only one who can play a grand staircase scene. RIGHT: Marshall laughs it up with modern horror maven Fred Olen Ray.



Photo courtesy of Fred Olen Ray

put. They would hear me, but they wouldn't respond. I was afraid it was going to be a very dreary story. The whole thing damned near took place solely in one house. The audience needs air. They need to get out from under a roof! It was not going to be a financially positive thing for anybody, and I don't think it did very well in the market. Naturally they couldn't do number three, having bolixed up the potential of number two. But the best thing I can say is that they did recognize that there was some merit in the first film.

SS: *Blacula* was a well-rounded character. Was that brought out more by the acting than the script?

WM: It was brought out by my mother's dear boy.

SS: *What caused the interest in black exploitation films in the 60s and 70s?*

WM: Desperation on the part of the studios. Desperation. MGM was going on the market. 20th Century Fox was considering the same thing. All of the major studios, who had been so incredibly productive over the centuries, were now threatened because of the advent of television.

SS: *The studios hadn't suddenly developed a social consciousness?*

WM: They had to compete. They realized, also, that they had an enormous market where black folks were concerned. Kids just lived in the movies. I remember, when I traveled on tour with *BLACULA*, that I touched down in at least 18 different cities. I made an appearance with the film and was introduced after the audience had seen it. And those kids—they were in those communities that African American people either lived near or had easy access to. There were still certain movie houses that they were not welcomed in at that time. It was exciting, and so incredibly informative about how proud black kids were to see a movie where there was a dignified person who had them on his mind. He wanted to do something about the negative plight of a people in a given country—such as our own. I have been to other places with other films, but this was the most exciting.

SS: *What led you into acting?*

WM: Well, I was not interested in acting at all. I had become a commercial artist. I had started painting when I was between three and four. I was the only child, and there were an awful lot of books in the library, and that meant that there were four or five pages that were clean. (Laughs) I'd be drawing

in the books that my mother and father had painstakingly brought here from Texas and South Carolina. I went to New York at the invitation of my mother's sister, who said, "I remember when you represented your school in the city-wide solo contest. You were 13 and your decoupage was very poor!" (Laughs) "But you sang beautifully. It's not that I'm suggesting that you should become a professional singer, but now that your voice has settled into something that you'll probably have for the rest of your life, you might begin to learn pieces to perform at social functions. Learn to do whatever it is you like best." And that's what I did. I went uptown to the Harlem YMCA. I was looking for a place where I could have a room, and wherever I went, in the Village area, they took the sign down very quickly. I wasn't prepared for the racism that had been so installed in the country. So I finally decided I'd better go to Harlem—at least there would be no racism! (Laughs) So I got a room at the Harlem YMCA for \$4.75 a week. Can you imagine that?

SS: *Times have changed quite a lot, haven't they?*

WM: The fact that I was a veteran was helpful in the price not being quite so high. There was a man there named Jamie Day, who was looking for someone to work with him, presenting programs that would prove enjoyable for servicemen who came to the Harlem YMCA. I had been studying for six months, and I could see that there was a positive difference in my ability to handle vocalization. But I was

terrified! Of course, I got over that, as people do when they see that people are not gonna stone them! (Laughs) So things began to open up for me in terms of my not being that artist hidden behind the canvas. Everyone was so positive about the fact that black servicemen and women had garnered such an incredible response from the people, that they were participating in this war despite being subjugated still to racism. I think that was one of the most positive things that ever came down the pike—that there was this drive towards black people saying, "I'm here. I'm going to make the best of it. And I'm going to be treated better. I'm going to insist on that."

SS: *Did your singing lead to acting?*

WM: I was on the sixth floor of the YMCA, and I was showering. It was in the afternoon, and I was singing in the shower. There was a knock on the door, and it was a man who was considerably older than myself. Past 30! (Laughs) "Mr. Marshall, I represent the men on the floor. They all like you fine. But we work the graveyard shift, and we come home and go to bed as quick as we can and hope we can sleep for a while. And it's at that time that you shower . . ." (Laughs) He said, "We had a meeting about you and your singing. Oscar Hammerstein and



Billy Rose are seeing people to be replacements on Broadway in *CARMEN JONES*. Why don't you think about going down there? So I went down to the theater and, after getting halfway through the song, I was hired! I couldn't believe it! I was in the show about 10 months, and then Billy Rose decided to close the show and prepare for a tour in the South! South, in the early 1940s! Now that was a problem. Then came Billy Rose with his trickery. This was a business tactic that was the vilest I've ever known, from that day to this! Everybody was fired! Everybody in the show! We had to come in and behave as if this had never happened, and sing while he decided whether we were eligible for the tour

SS: *That's producers for you!*

WM: Well, that's a producer. (Laughs) I decided that I was not going to audition. I was quite happy doing what I had been doing at the Harlem Y. Billy Rose sent some lady to see if she could talk me into coming down to audition, but I said, "There's no way they can get me to go South. I've had enough of that nonsense, of that damnable treatment." Rose said that he wanted to proffer a proper deal. He wasn't talking to me himself; he just wanted to get me to come down to the theater again. He invited me to his office. Have you ever seen a picture of Billy Rose?

SS: No.

WM: I think he was about four-foot-ten. It's not an awful height, but it is for a man who wants to be twice that height. Rose was a fascinating man in many ways, and as corrupt as he could be. He said he'd heard that I was not going with the show. "Why? Where are you going?" I said, "I'm not going anywhere that I haven't been already. I'm an artist. I paint." He said, "You mean you would give your time to that, when you could become a great and recognized singer and actor?" I said, "I don't have any particular desire in that area. I'm not against it. But it's not something that I want to give my life to." So he told me there was a show called *ANNA LUCAS-TA*, which was running a couple of blocks from where I lived at the Y. Rose pointed out that the lead was making something like \$175 a week, and he said, "You're asking us for something like \$250 a week! You'll be tripping over your long white

beard before you get that much money! Nobody knows you! You're not anybody!" I said, "Oh, yes, I am. If you don't believe me, just call this number—my mother will answer. She'll tell you who I am. I'm her only son, and they've invested their very best in me." (Laughs) And I excused myself from Billy Rose, and he stood there with his mouth agape. He couldn't believe this. And I believing it strongly, went directly to the subway, got on it, and back to the Harlem Y.

SS: *That's quite a start in the profession! There's another minority present*



Photo courtesy of Richard Arnold

William Marshall created "The Ultimate Computer" and met the ultimate ham on *STAR TREK*.

in *BLACULA* the two gay antique dealers. Was that considered a daring move at the time?

WM: Well, yes, I had that impression, but the producers nervously moved ahead with it. To see whether it would be acceptable, I guess.

SS: *They were presented more stereotypically than some of the other characters in the film*

WM: They were pretty grand, without question. I thought it was a good route that they chose. They were both intelligent characters, and I had the sense of their having their careers cut out for themselves, that they were pursuing that and that, flames that they were, they were burning good flint. (Laughs) It's hard to see that film and not remember them.

SS: *The end of the film, when Blacula sacrifices himself by walking into the daylight, comes as a surprise*

WM: I think it was my idea. I know we discussed it a lot. He had to do it, because he had no reason to live any longer—having lost his true love.

SS: *SCREAM, BLACULA, SCREAM! had you seeking a cure.*

WM. He wanted to find how best to cure himself, so that he could become a meaningful member of society.

SS: *Were there ever any plans to pit you against that other great AIP vampire, Count Yorga?*

WM: It wasn't Robert Quarry that they wanted going to pit me against. It was Vincent Price. That was how Sam Arkoff saw it. That it was a struggle between we two—Price and myself. It was certainly on the drawing boards. It was Sam Arkoff's dream to bring us together.

SS: *The next film you made was ABBY.*

WM: Same studio. And that certainly required input, because I found their first version to be very dreary. You know the mentality of producers: They don't want to hear anything, but they're delighted if there is a spark that might cause people to leave the streets and go into the theater. (Laughs)

SS: *You appeared in the original plot for THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E., which was later released theatrically.*

WM: The most unusual thing that comes to mind is that Kennedy was assassinated at that time. I was called very early—earlier than my call had been—and I was told that he had been assassinated, and that the actress who was going to play opposite me was a very

close friend of the Kennedy family. She was unable to work that day, because she was so distressed by the assassination. We didn't work in fact, for two or three days. I was picked up on the day that we were to resume shooting, and I asked if she would come and sit with me a few minutes before we shot. I think I wanted to apologize for not being sensitive to the fact that she was a close friend of the Kennedys. So she sat in the car with me and I told her, and she said, "But they told me that you were a close friend of the Kennedys!" (Laughs) And that's why we hadn't been shooting. I said, "Well, I'll be damned!"

SS: *You also appeared on the original STAR TREK.*

WM: Yes. I was the inventor of the ultimate computer! I programmed it with my own ingrams, and there was the problem! (Laughs) The problem of humankind is with itself. That's rich drama, invariably, when one is at war with oneself and society. It was a fascinating role. I

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BATMAN FOREVER photos: Ralph Nelson © 1995 DC Comics

FIRST TIME AT BAT

Joel Schumacher

Tim Burton is a tough act to follow, but director Joel Schumacher has done just that with this summer's release of **BATMAN FOREVER**, the third in Warner Bros.' big-screen adventures of the Dark Knight and the first not to be helmed by the man behind last year's decidedly batty **ED WOOD**.

The new Batfilm has a new Batman as well: Val Kilmer, filling the cowl, cape, and codpiece of the departing Michael Keaton. It has two colorful villains in Two-Face and the Riddler, and two dynamic stars (Tommy Lee Jones and Jim Carrey) to bring them to malevolent life. It has a sexy new love interest for millionaire Bruce Wayne: Dr. Chase Meridian, played by Nicole Kidman.

And it has hot Chris O'Donnell as Dick Grayson, better known as Robin the Boy Wonder!

Joel Schumacher began his career in the entertainment industry as an art director for TV commercials. From there, he moved on to designing costumes for such films as **SLEEPER** (1973) and **THE LAST OF SHEILA** (1973). Next on the agenda was writing the scripts for **SPARKLE** (1976) and **CAR WASH** (1976). Then came directing, first for television and then for the big screen.

Among the native New Yorker's genre credits: **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN** (1981), **THE LOST BOYS** (1987), and **FLATLINERS** (1990).

And now it's time for slugger Joel Schumacher to step up to the plate for (he hopes) his biggest hit to date: **BATMAN FOREVER**!

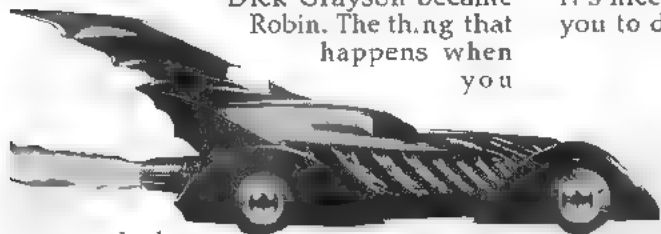
interviewed by Jessie Lilley

Scarlet Street: How difficult is it to take over a series from another director?

Joel Schumacher: Well, it's very hard, and not hard at all, because what you have to do is to forget the other two Batman movies and start again. Nobody—especially Tim—wanted me to copy anything. I was asked to do my version of Batman. I had seen the two movies that Tim made when they came out, but I did not go back and look at them. I went to the comic books. I went from 1939 to the present, with all those extraordinary artists and storytellers who had worked on Batman. I don't know how many I read, but I immersed myself. DC Comics was very helpful; they sent me everything they possibly could.

SS: *What struck you hardest about the character of Batman?*

JS: I really fell in love with the mythic elements—you know, how Bruce Wayne became Batman, how Dick Grayson became Robin. The thing that happens when you



read a lot of comic books is that you fall in love all over again with color, just like when you were a little kid and got your first shot at the crayon. (Laughs) There have been so many outstanding artists who have contributed to Batman over the years, and it's not unusual to see a whole street sequence that's all magenta. So we tried to create a living comic book.

SS: *That's quite a job!*

JS: When Bob Daly and Terry Semel offered me this movie, I thought, "Really, a Batman movie? That'll be fun!" Then, when I got into the logistics and the complicated machinery of mounting something like this, I thought, "You fool! This isn't going to be fun, this is going to be the hardest job of your life!" (Laughs) That was about two months before we started shooting. The second we started shooting, it was so much fun! It was so much fun to go to work! I don't know how I'm ever going to go back to a regular movie, because once you've made a living comic book, and the Reality Police are not hovering around you all the time . . .

SS: *So it's a new kind of Batfilm.*

JS: I also think that the minute Val Kilmer enters the movie it becomes a new Batman movie—because, of course, we have a new Batman.

SS: *You have a Batman with a chin!*

JS: (Laughs) Now, now . . . we have a very, very handsome, young Batman. He's also a great actor. And the new Batsuit . . .

SS: *Is anatomically unique.*

JS: It's much more body conscious, and very flexible, so that there's a lot of movement. There are a lot of martial arts scenes in the movie.

SS: *Honestly—does it make it more or less difficult when the original director of a series is producing the film you're directing?*

JS: It made it very easy for me, because Tim and I have been friends since LOST BOYS. He used to come and visit the set, because he was preparing BEETLEJUICE. He's always been very kind and supportive to me, and I hope vice versa. It's nice when a friend encourages you to do something that involves

them. He did the greatest thing that any producer could do, which doesn't surprise me, because he's a director: He let me make my movie. Tim went off and filmed ED WOOD, and went on with his life. He didn't try to tell me how to make the movie. I think, sometimes, producers do that with directors—but I don't think directors do that with directors. We don't want it done to ourselves. (Laughs)

SS: *Is it accurate to say that Warner Brothers was not happy with the dark tone of BATMAN RETURNS?*

JS: I don't know. When they asked me if I would be interested in doing a new Batman, I said, "Only if Tim wants me to. I won't do it if he doesn't." So I went to see Tim, and we had lunch and he was very anxious for me to do it. Then I set about thinking about what I would do. At no time did anyone tell me "dos and don'ts," or criticize Tim in any way, or his movies—which had been very profitable for them. I know that some people had complained that they were dark, but no one complained to me.



"Val always says to me, 'I wasn't always the smartest or most attractive person in my family'—so God knows what the other ones are like! They're probably on Mount Olympus!"

SS: But it's safe to say that *BATMAN FOREVER* will be lighter in tone?

JS: Well, you know—they are called comic books. (Laughs) But all Batman comics are rooted in good stories, and there's always a dark edge; there's always a serious side to them. Bruce Wayne is a man—a real man, not a superhero from another planet. He has human problems and human frailties. I hope that the Batman myth, the story of duality, the love story, the Robin story, and the two great villains—I hope it will create a total entertainment, so that there's fun and games, and romance, and some use of the Batman myth.

SS: The original scripts for both *BATMAN* and *BATMAN RETURNS* featured the Boy Wonder, only to drop him just before filming began. How did you manage to retain Robin for *BATMAN FOREVER*?

JS: It was never a choice. I always wanted to bring that character in, so he was written in from the beginning. In other words, he was always a part of the story. And we not only see how Bruce Wayne became Batman, we also see how Dick Grayson becomes Robin.

SS: We understand that Michael Keaton was unhappy that the villains in *BATMAN RETURNS* gobbled up most of the screen time. How did you manage to give Batman his fair share in *BATMAN FOREVER*?

JS: Oh, I'm most comfortable working with an ensemble. *LOST BOYS* is an ensemble. *COUSINS*, *FLATLINERS*, *THE CLIENT*... I almost always work that way. So, I'm very comfortable with that way of telling a story, with many people interconnected. I think you can have as many characters as you want in a movie, as long as they're connected, as long as they interact.

SS: So, you're a juggler.

JS: (Laughs) Let's hope! Let's hope I haven't dropped it. You know, I really see life as an ensemble. For instance, in *your* movie, you're a journalist interviewing the director of *BATMAN FOREVER*. In *my* movie, I'm the director of *BATMAN FOREVER* doing a very, very happy interview with a charming journalist. So those are two kinds of movies, two different points of view. Now if this was a conference call, there would be maybe four or five more people on this. Well, I'm

more interested in how the four or five people connect than in one person's story. Not that I'm comparing myself to a great master like Robert Altman, but both *MASH* and *NASHVILLE* really impressed me, at a time when I was just dreaming so much about getting started. One of the first movies I wrote, *CAR WASH*, is a day in a car wash, and I'm sure it's because of those Altman movies that I was able to even think that you could do a day in a car wash and make a movie about every single human being that worked there and came in there. One of the first TV movies that I wrote and directed, *AMATEUR NIGHT AT THE DIXIE BAR AND GRILL*, was one night in a bar. I think that I was able to start looking at film like that because of the Altman films.

SS: What has Val Kilmer brought to the character of Batman?

JS: Besides being a stunning man, Val is a very, very sensitive and intelligent actor—with great depth. He is very complex. I mean, anybody who can play Jim Morrison and Doc Holliday... that was how I got the idea. I was in Santa Barbara

PREVIOUS PAGE: Unlike other comic-book superheroes, Batman and Robin are just plain, ordinary human beings, average males—who like to dress in rubber. **LEFT:** Lily Tomlin (pictured with Henry Gibson and Elizabeth Wilson) underplays for a scene from Joel Schumacher's *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN* (1981). **RIGHT:** Julia Roberts and Kiefer Sutherland find love after death in *FLATLINERS* (1990).



with a bunch of my friends watching *TOMBSTONE*, and I thought, "Boy, if they ever make a Batman movie and Michael doesn't want to do it, or if they don't want to do it with him, Val would be great." But I never mentioned it, because I was always thinking that we were making the movie with Michael. And then one day out of the blue, I got a call from one of the head honchos, and he said, "Have you ever thought of anyone else for Bruce Wayne and Batman?" I said, "Val Kilmer. Why?" He said, "Interesting." I said, "Why?" "Just curious." And then, a couple of weeks later, I got a call to come to the big conference room and there were several "top suits" there. They said, "You still like Val Kilmer?" I said, "You betcha!" They said, "Does he want to do it?" I said, "How would I know? I haven't talked to him in two years." They said, "You'd better find out." So I called Val Kilmer's agent, and they couldn't find him, because Val was deep in the bush in Africa. He was writing a script that he wanted to play—a true story about a man who spent most of his life with primitive tribes in Africa. He had gone to the tribes where this man had lived, and he was so far into the bush that they couldn't find him for three days! When they found him—Scout's honor; you can call Val—he was in a bat cave!

SS: No!

JS: Yes! (Laughs) A guide came into the bat cave and said, "You have got to call the United States; you have got to call your agent." So, Val traveled to some kind of hook-up phone, where he called his agent, and his agent said, "Joel Schumacher wants you to play Batman. We'll send you the script if you're interested, and he'll meet you in London, or something. You guys can talk it over." And Val said, "Oh, I know Joel. If he wants me, sure. I'll do it." And then he went back into the bush! (Laughs) So, that's how it happened.

SS: Val Kilmer seems like a class act.

JS: There's something—and I mean this in the least pretentious way possible—but there's something "to the manor born" about Val. I met his mother, and she seems like such an extraordinarily elegant lady. Val always says to me, "I wasn't always the smartest or most attractive person in my family"—so God knows what the other ones are like! (Laughs) They're probably on Mount Olympus!



The two Coreys (Haim and Feldman) fought adolescent bloodsuckers (IN-SET) in *THE LOST BOYS* (1987).

SS: Your Robin is considerably older than the 12-year-old boy who was first introduced in the comics—or, for that matter, the 16-year-old that he was in most of the stories.

JS: Well, I met a lot of people. Every color, every creed, every nationality, every age—and there was nobody who was better for our version than Chris O'Donnell. I wanted a Robin that you would believe. I really wanted you to believe that it was somebody who would go out into the streets of Gotham at night and kick ass. (Laughs)

SS: And a 12-year-old boy couldn't

JS: Well, there are some 12-year-old boys... but I don't know if I necessarily wanted to tell the story of a 12-year-old vigilante. You know, 1939 was a much different time than 1995. I don't know how much encouragement 12-year olds need nowadays to be violent. I'd just done *THE CLIENT*, where the client was 10, and part of the finale is Susan Sarandon tricking the villain so that she does not have to use the loaded gun she's holding on him. She outsmarts him. She says to the boy at the end of the movie, "If you shoot him, you will be him." So I wasn't keen on having a

12-year-old adopt mayhem and vigilantism in Gotham City

SS: How does having an older Robin work in the context of the story?

JS: Well, I thought that, if Robin was a young man, there would be much more conflict—which there is. He's very angry and hurt because of his parents' and brother's deaths. He's living for vengeance, and because we tried to construct a story of duality, he's a perfect mirror to Bruce Wayne. Like most of us who are older, we try to spare young people the same pain and the same path we've taken. Robin's a very formidable opponent, because Chris O'Donnell is a very strong actor, and so is Val. I thought it would be much more powerful if they were two young men.

SS: Batman has some of the most memorable villains in comic history. Why then, with the exception of the Joker in *BATMAN*, has it been necessary to feature two villains in each film?

JS: Well, for a couple of reasons. First of all, because the Riddler is not a violent force, per se. He's really a brain. He plays mind games. Two-Face is a violent criminal. It gave

Continued on page 57

GOTHAM CITY REBORN

article and interview by
Sean Farrell
and Jessie Lilley

BATMAN FOREVER delivers a kinder, gentler Gotham City for the Dark Knight to prowl. The task of recreating Batman's home turf, as well as the overall look of the film, fell to production designer Barbara Ling. "I'm the overall designer," Ling explains. "Under me, you have an art director who carries the designs through to the construction department and makes sure that they get built the way you want them. Set designers are the draftsmen. It's different from theater; it's a different terminology. They confuse it all in film."

Not so confusing is how Ling's designs differ from those in the previous Batfilms. "The most stunning difference is the use of color," Ling says. "It's a more washed-in-color dark city, rather than a black and white city. Comics were never just black and white. There was always this great sense of colorful washes, where you'd turn a page and the whole scene would be washed in blue. Then you'd turn another page and it would be washed in red. It's a stunning illustration idea and we thought, 'Why not? This is what comics are all about.' So there's a tremendous amount of color—very deep, saturated color that washes over everything, scene by scene."

"The other difference is that it's much larger. We see a huge proportion of Gotham City this time, which is why we went to New York to shoot. I redid some of the Wall Street area to be able to get what I call a World's Fair proportion of Gotham, with people ant-sized next to the buildings. Rather than just a back lot, we ended up using real elements and back-lot elements. It has a very monumental feel, a wider scope."

Whereas the first BATMAN had seven sets, and BATMAN RETURNS had about twice that number, the BATMAN FOREVER crew had close to 75 sets at their disposal. "We see different areas of Gotham rather than just a few streets and a square. Every scene is a new location set of gigantic proportions."

BATMAN FOREVER's new look extends well below the surface. "I wanted to build the Bat Cave fully this time," Ling says, "so we could actually walk around and see it. In the film, the Bat Cave had to be blown up. It was actually hard for everybody, because it was so much fun being in the Bat Cave. We

wound up saying, 'All right, it's blowing up—but not all the way!'

"The Riddler's Control Center Dome was the biggest challenge in terms of building. It was this huge dome that we had suspended on stage. The most difficult to capture in terms of the characterization was Two-Face's Lair. His world is half and half. It's half good and half bad, so within an instant you have to be able to see this and understand what it's about. Ironically, it sounded like it would be easy—but when it came to designing the thing, it was very difficult. It isn't like you can just have bad-looking furniture and good-looking furniture. It has to be very, very extreme."

In addition to the sets, Ling also reworked the Batmobile, the Batboat, and even the Batwing that was seen in the first film. "Everything's brand new," she confirms. "They didn't let me build the Batwing in total scope. I had to do that in miniature; we built it half scale. But they let me build the boat and the car."

"Everything reflects the theme, which in this case is the bat—the ribs of the bat, the wing of the bat, the skeletal quality of the bat. I worked closely with [costume designer] Bob Ringwood so that the car reflects the suit and it all works beautifully together. The car is very much like a bat. It has ribs on the side that are underlit, and Batman's costume reflects this ribbing. It's very much a graphic statement."

Ling realizes that production design requires a good relationship

between hers and other departments, such as makeup and special effects. "It's important that all of us work closely together. The one thing you don't want to happen is that you're going one way and they arrive with something that has nothing to do with what you've got. So it's a very tight bond with those departments and myself."

Comparing BATMAN FOREVER with previous film projects, Ling says, "It's totally different from anything I've ever done. It's much larger. Very few times in your life will anyone say, 'Create a whole world. You have a year to do it.' Most of the time, it's, 'You have three months. Go! It's a designer's dream, and you only get one or two of them in your life.'"



The brand-new Batmobile races through a brand-new Gotham City.



FIRST TIME AT BAT

Continued from page 55

me two villains to work together—one a mind, one a violent criminal. It gave me a physical threat, and a mental threat.

SS: One of the complaints about the previous films was that they were weak plotwise. Does *BATMAN FOREVER* have a tighter script?

JS: *BATMAN FOREVER* has a very strong story about duality and Bruce Wayne coming to terms with why he became Batman, so that Bruce Wayne and Batman can coexist. Everything in our movie feeds that story. The Robin character is the reflection of Bruce Wayne's own choice when he was younger—seeing a young man go through that again, realizing the price. Nicole Kidman plays a criminologist, an expert on dual personalities. She is in love with Batman, and Bruce Wayne is in love with her, so we have a triangle with only two people in it. Harvey Two-Face—need I explain? (Laughs) Then the Riddler—the manifestation of the Riddler is a question mark. It's the ultimate question of whether Bruce Wayne and Batman can coexist in one man. How he does that I'm not going to tell you. So, although we have a lot of characters, and although we have a lot of stories to tell, it's all about one thing.

SS: How closely did you stick to the script on *BATMAN FOREVER*? You've got some high-powered actors, such as Jim Carrey, who are accustomed to taking a scene and running with it.

JS: You must always allow room for artists to create, no matter how tight the script is. But Jim—Jim is one of the most rehearsed people in the world. His genius is that it all looks like he's making it up on the spot. But, he isn't. He has rehearsed it. Jim acts with every scintilla of his body—his toes, his fingers, and, of course, his facial contortions are incredible. (Laughs) He also works with a cane and a hat and several extraordinary props in this movie, and he has this stuff down. You know, I worked with Lily Tomlin very early in my career, on *SHRINKING WOMAN*, and people who are used to doing one-person shows—they rehearse. It looks spontaneous, but they know what they're doing. Then, too, you get ideas on the set all the time. I mean, anybody has a good idea... we can shoot three takes, and if somebody's got a better idea, let's try it. You've got to run a loose/tight ship.



SS: You've made *FLATLINERS*, *THE LOST BOYS*, *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING WOMAN*... do you have a special affinity for horror and sci-fi?

JS: I love horror and sci-fi. The greatest thing in my whole life, when I can't sleep, is if I turn on the TV and there's some terrible old horror movie on. I love horror and sci-fi, and I don't care what it is. I will watch the worst movie ever made! (Laughs)

SS: Then you must have your own copy of *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*.

JS: I do! I'm a big Ed Wood fan. If you don't love Ed Wood, then you don't love movies. I wish someone would bring me a horror or sci-fi movie, because I loved making *LOST BOYS* and *FLATLINERS* so much.

SS: Whose idea was it to give vampire movies a California surfer slant in *THE LOST BOYS*?

JS: Well, when I was given it, the script was set in Santa Cruz, which is a coast town in Northern California. It was all children. It was really wholesome, a G-rated movie. I was going to say no. Then I thought, "Well, if they live in a cave, why couldn't the cave be on the San Andreas fault? There could have been stuff done with this hotel,

that fell into the crack." And when I saw the hotel fall into the crack, well, then I thought, "Why couldn't they be teenagers, and why couldn't they look like English Gypsies, and why couldn't they be really cool, and why couldn't they have motorcycles?"—and yada yada, yada, and that's how it all happened. By the time I'd called everyone to tell them no, I wasn't going to do the movie, I said, "Well, let me come in and talk to you; I think I have an idea." When I told them, they were froth-

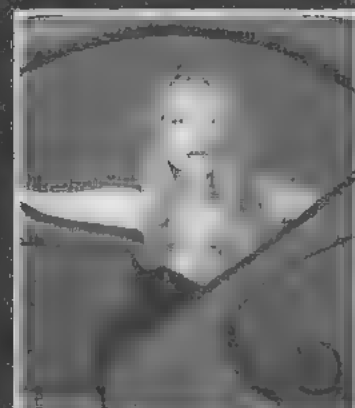
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GOTHAM'S CITIZENS KANE

Bob Kane and Elizabeth Sanders

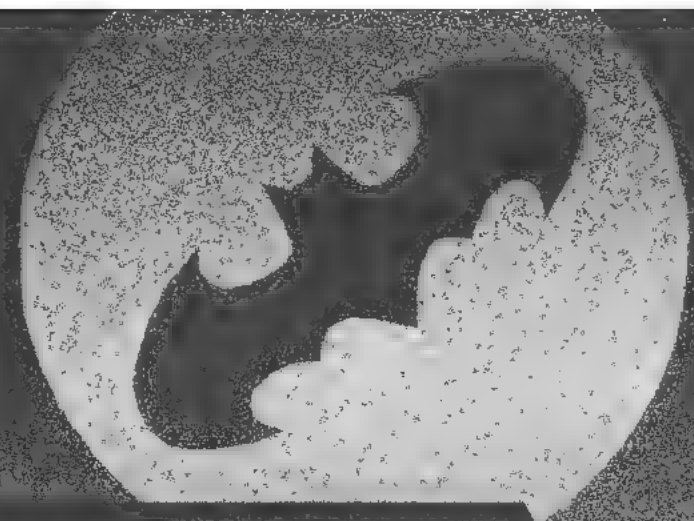
article and interview by Sean Farrell and Jessie Lilley



As the legend goes, when Warner Brothers (and sister Dot) decided to make a third live-action film in their lucrative Batman series (despite the fact that 1992's *BATMAN RETURNS* had been considered a disappointment), the title *BATMAN FOREVER* was

chosen because it invoked the mythic quality of the comic books—not because it sounds like the latest mind-blowing ride at the Six Flags theme parks.

When Tim Burton reportedly expressed his desire to direct this new Bat escapade (instead going off on



1. Two-Face (formerly District Attorney Harvey Dent)
2. The Batman
3. Commissioner James Gordon
4. Robin the Boy Wonder
5. Sugar and Spice
6. Citizen Bob Kane
7. Dick Grayson
8. Dr. Chase Meridian
9. Alfred Pennyworth
10. The Riddler (formerly Edward Nygma)
11. Bruce Wayne



helm the brilliant **ED WOOD**, Joel Schumacher promptly took up the reins of reinventing the dark and Gothic Batman universe on film. Another change from the previous Burton brood-fests was in store when star Michael Keaton dropped out. With the casting of Val Kilmer

as the Caped Crusader, followed by confirmation that Robin the Boy Wonder would finally make his series debut, word quickly spread that everything—including Gotham's kitchen sinks—had undergone major changes for **BATMAN FOREVER**.

Though still dark and Gothic, the new film has a lighter tone and a more colorful, comic-book style of lighting by director of photography Stephen Goldblatt. The Batmobile has been redesigned by production designer Barbara Ling and transformed from a lean, mean, muscle car into a weird, insect-like "creature" sprouting large wings on top. (Never mind the baddies; Batman now has to worry about low overpasses!)

Costume designers Bob Ringwood and Ingrid Ferrin have not only turned the Boy Wonder into an anatomically astonishing Robo-Robin, but their new design for Batman's duds has eliminated the famous black-on-yellow Bat symbol from the Caped Crusader's chest!

Batfans may cry foul, but Batman's creator, Bob Kane, couldn't be happier.

"It's what we call progress," he beams. "Batman was created over 50 years ago, and I was just a kid at that time."

Now in his early 70s, Bob Kane is enjoying the ongoing success of the Dark Knight with the release of *BATMAN FOREVER*, a film that brings a Joker grin to his face. "It's better," Kane says simply, comparing the third installment to *BATMAN* (1989) and *BATMAN RETURNS* (1992). "It's much better. To begin with, it has a better script, and a script is really the foundation of

any movie. It's lighter, with more humor—it's not as dark as the other two.

"I liked Jack Nicholson in *BATMAN*, of course. The first movie was a blowout. Fans had waited years for it to happen, so the hype was at an all-time high. It was a very good movie, I thought."

Gotham's *Citizen Kane* isn't so kindly disposed toward *BATMAN RETURNS*, however. "It was too grim. For one thing, Danny DeVito's makeup as the Penguin was horrendous. In *BATMAN FOREVER*, Two-Face is horrendous, but in a more benign way—even though part of his face is scarred."

In addition to Val Kilmer as Bruce Wayne/Batman, Tommy Lee Jones as Harvey Dent/Two-Face, Jim Carrey as Edward Nygma/the Riddler, Nicole Kidman as Dr. Chase Meridian, Chris O'Donnell as Dick Grayson/Robin, Michael Gough as Alfred Pennyworth, and Pat Hingle as Commissioner James Gordon, *BATMAN FOREVER* features Kane's wife, Elizabeth Sanders, as Gossip Gertie.

"I enjoyed it immensely," Sanders says of her small but showy role. "My scenes were with Val Kilmer and Jim Carrey, and they're so sweet to work off."

As her name implies, Gossip Gertie is a Gotham City talk show hostess. "We see her out and about at all the social events," Sanders says, "including the party for Ed Nigma when he presents his major invention to the world, and at the circus where the Flying Graysons are performing. I discussed Gertie with the director, Joel Schumacher, and he said she's really a combination of Hedda Hopper, Louella Parsons, Rona Barrett, and Oprah Winfrey—all those ladies rolled into one. He wanted her bigger than life, very flamboyant and always in the middle of everything."

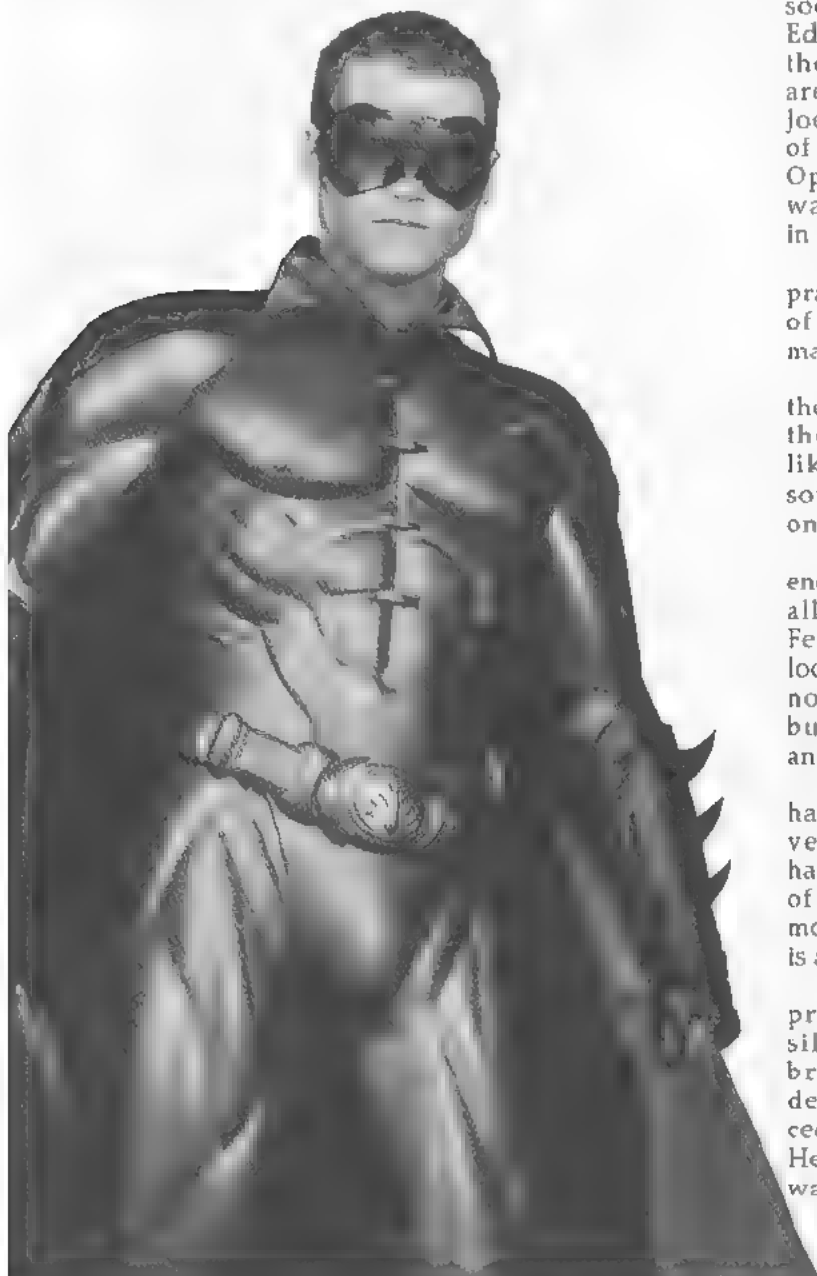
Concerning Schumacher, Bob Kane has nothing but praise. "Joel Schumacher is excellent in the tradition of a Tim Burton. He certainly equals Tim Burton's movie-making technique. He's terrific."

"The sets are spectacular, too. Anton Furst, who did the sets the first time, was great, but the girl who did these sets—Barbara Ling—she's terrific! Her sets are like something by Michaelangelo, a thousand feet tall, some of them, and futuristic. You can't put your finger on the time period—which is the Batman mystique."

Except for his much-publicized disdain for the presence of rubber nipples, Kane sees little change in the all-new Batsuit designed by Bob Ringwood and Ingrid Ferrin. "Unless you pick it apart, the average eye would look at the uniforms from the three Batman movies and not notice a difference. This one has a lighter latex, but in general it has the contours of the chest muscles and so forth, like the costumes in the first two films."

As for Robin, Kane admits that *BATMAN FOREVER* has abandoned the original Boy Wonder outfit of red vest, green shorts, and yellow cape. "Well, the costume has changed. He's now wearing, more or less, the kind of uniform that Batman wears. This Robin in the new movie is pretty tall. Val's about six feet tall, and Chris is about five-eight."

Having witnessed Robin's banishment from the previous films, Kane is glad to finally see him on the silver screen. "They've made Robin a '90s kind of a brash, tough kid who is frustrated by his parents' death—blaming it on Batman, because Batman interceded in the whole flurry of Two-Face at the circus. He's tough, until he mellows a bit. I think Burt Ward was very good in the campy TV show. He was kind of





PREVIOUS PAGE: Robin's new costume proves that he isn't called Dick for nothing. **LEFT:** The Riddler (Jim Carrey) greatly resembles his comic-book and television counterparts. **RIGHT:** Gossip Gertie (Elizabeth Sanders) attends the circus with Bruce Wayne and Chase Meridian (Val Kilmer and Nicole Kidman.)

obnoxious, but that was the part he played. I thought he looked just like Robin. Chris O'Donnell is an excellent actor, and he really gets into the part. He's not sweet, like he was in *SCENT OF A WOMAN*."

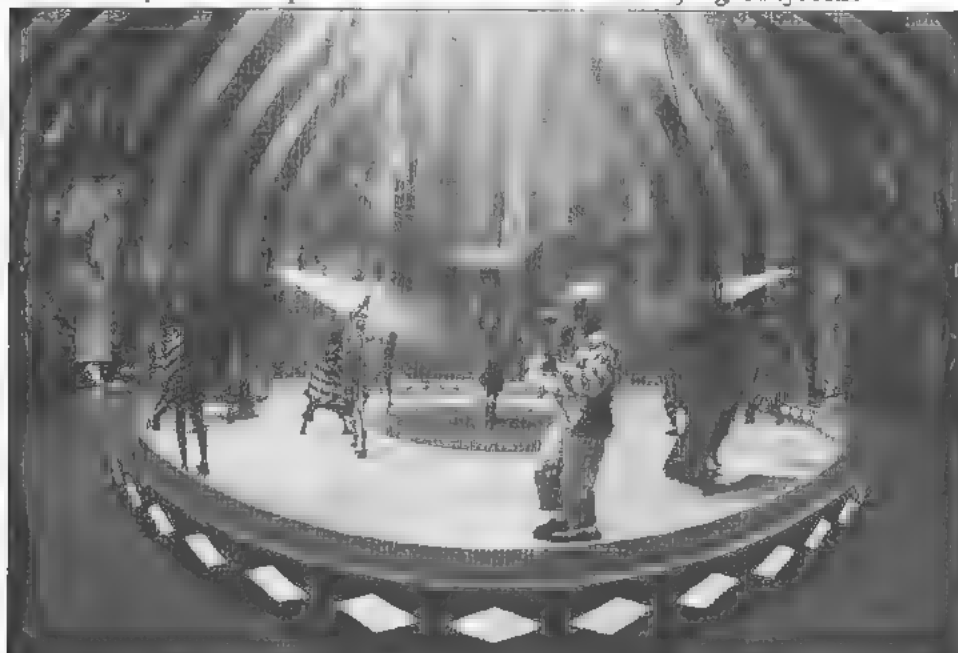
BATMAN FOREVER's Robin is considerably older than his comic book predecessor. "Well, in the books, Dick Grayson joined the Team Titans. They made him taller and older and he went to College. I liked him when he was younger, but I don't think the fans object to that one way or another, frankly. They accept Robin either younger and older."

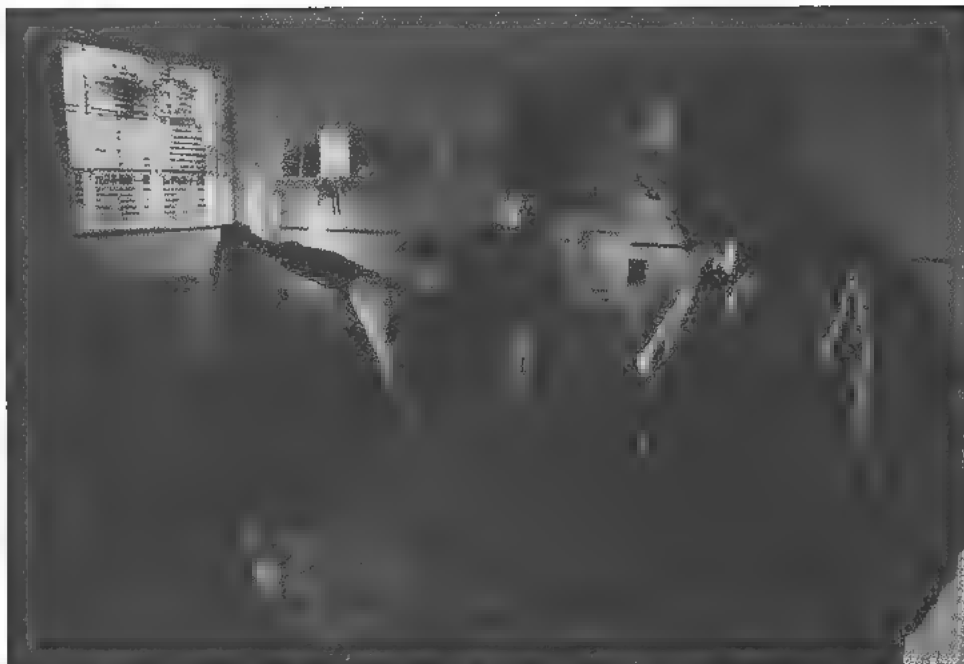
Kane doesn't see the departure of Michael Keaton from the series as a great loss. "Michael, who doesn't re-

semble Batman as I drew him in the comic, did the best with what he had. Now we have Val Kilmer, who's much better physically. He looks like Batman, he's taller, he's huskier, and he has a square jaw and classic features. He looks just like Bruce Wayne; he's very suave and debonair. Val is an excellent actor, of course. He was excellent in *TOMBSTONE* and *THE DOORS* and, like Chris, he really gets into the part."

Elizabeth Sanders shares her husband's views on the new Batman. "I love him. Val as a person has an old-world quality. He's very courteous, he has impeccable manners—he's almost from another world. It meshes so well with the character of Bruce Wayne.

LEFT: The circus arrives in Gotham City, and it's the cue for Robin the Boy Wonder to make his long-awaited debut in the Batman movie series. **RIGHT:** In *BATMAN FOREVER*, it's Two-Face (Tommy Lee Jones), not Boss Zucco, who is responsible for the death of the Flying Graysons.





LEFT: Bruce Wayne (Val Kilmer) tries to puzzle out the latest bizarre clues from the Riddler. RIGHT: Alfred (Michael Gough) watches while Dick Grayson (Chris O'Donnell) gets a kick out of life at Wayne Manor.

Michael was very good, too, but physically Val is so much closer to what Bob originally created."

Batman first hit the newsstands in 1939 as the cover story of *Detective Comics* #27. Classic literature and motion pictures were among the inspirations for the soon to be legendary hero—but the main influence was a flying machine invented by Leonardo Da Vinci

"It was called an Orinthopter," Kane relates. "It was mounted on a sled, with huge bat wings attached, it looked like a bat man to me. That was my first influence, and a major one. Then there was the dual identity of Zorro. Douglas Fairbanks Sr., the most swashbuckling actor of all time, played Zorro and he did all his own stunts. He was an acrobatman, you might say. The third influence: There was a movie in the '30s called *THE BAT*, and I was an ardent moviegoer. The Bat was a villain, but he wore a bat costume. I just changed it around and put it on Batman and made him a hero. I put it all together with my little Batpen."

The fatality rate in *BATMAN* and *BATMAN RETURNS* was high. With both the Joker and Penguin dead, and Catwoman missing in action (the rumor of a Catwoman film directed by Burton may remain just that), the Caped Crusader is fast running out of threats to face in future movies.

"There are a couple left" Kane quickly points out. "The Scarecrow was in the comic, and there's Man Bat, a man who turns into a real bat, who is the antithesis of Batman. There were so many villains created for the TV show—they might borrow Mr. Freeze or I could create some new villains that would be accepted, I'm sure, by the public.

"But you know movies—they can always make them survive some way. I think the Joker deserves another turn. They'll resurrect him, I'm sure—along with Jesus in the year 2000!"

Kane holds a soft spot for the Clown Prince of Crime. "He's absolutely my favorite. He's like Moriarty is to Sherlock Holmes; he's the greatest villain."

Oddly enough, like Mr. Holmes at the Reichenbach Falls, the Joker has also returned from a watery grave.

"In the first Joker story, way back in 1940, I killed him off. He drowned, and that was the end of him. But my editor liked him so much that we added a little P. S. at the end, with Batman saying, 'Well, Robin, I wonder if he really drowned.' And, of course, we saved him for another day."

According to Kane, the inspiration for the Joker can be found in the 1928 film *THE MAN WHO LAUGHS*, starring Conrad Veidt as a gypsy who, while still a boy, had his face slashed into a horrible grin. "I saw a photo from it. If you covered his mouth, he looked very ominous and depressed and violent—but his mouth always had a ghastly grin."

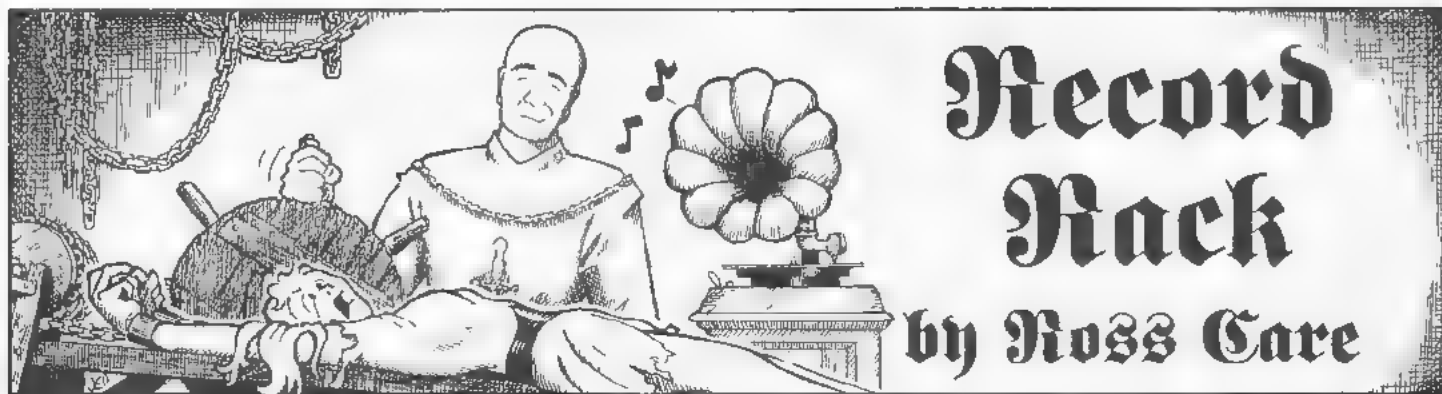
The Joker's history has long been the subject of debate in comic-book circles. "I had a ghostwriter way back named Jerry Robinson, who claims he created the Joker, not Bob Kane. It's been going on for years, like a feud. He gave me a Joker card where the Joker looked like a court jester with a three-winged hat and bells. Had I created the Joker from the card, he would look just like the card, instead of the face that I drew from Conrad Veidt's photograph. That proves I'm right and Jerry Robinson is wrong."

Along with Robinson, writer Bill Finger and artist Dick Sprang also helped Kane with the multiple Bat books during the Golden Age of Comics in the 1940s. Later, Batman inspired such artists as Neal Adams (in the 1970s) and Frank Miller (in the 1980s) to try their hand at the Dark Knight legend. Kane has had little input with the new generation of writers and artists entrusted with Batman's care.

"I lost editorial control when I left, and DC Comics just took it upon themselves to redesign a lot of the situations," Kane says. "I gave up drawing Batman in 1966. I just got tired of bending over a hot drawing board, so I went to other pastures. I've done Batman lithographs and started writing screenplays."

Kane's departure from DC coincided with a national craze when *BATMAN*, starring Adam West and Burt

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As I delve more deeply into the music of the studio era, two of the most consistently interesting composers to emerge are Franz Waxman (1906-1967) and Hugo Friedhofer (1902-1981). Friedhofer, who allegedly was not keen on having his music heard apart from the actual films, remains highly respected within film music circles, but less known by the general public. The German-born Waxman, however, has undergone a well-deserved renaissance, with reissues of his original soundtrack LPs from the 1950s, several anthologies, and new versions of some of his many classic Golden Age scores all currently available on CD.

The latest entry in the Waxman revival (given a major boost by the *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* CD covered here in an earlier column) is Waxman's score for Alfred Hitchcock's first American film, *REBECCA* (1940), newly recorded in digital by composer/conductor/ Respighi buff, Adriano. (Marco Polo 8.223399, 15 tracks, 72.25).

Waxman was one of the most versatile composers of the studio era, adept at creating both vivid, memorable themes and at skillfully developing the score as a cohesive dramatic whole. His work seems to fall into two general categories: scores that are immediately accessible—*PRINCE VALIANT* (1954), with its *STAR WARS* heroics and tender love theme, *PEYTON PLACE* (1957), with its unforgettable main theme—and those that reveal their stature more clearly over repeated hearings. For instance, I had to hear the main theme for *ELEPHANT WALK* (1954) several times before realizing what a gorgeous melody it actually is, and likewise for Waxman's second Hitchcock score, *SUSPICION* in 1941.

REBECCA was the first of four scores Waxman did for Hitchcock, and the second of three for David O. Selznick, and the film itself is a fasci-

nating fusion of the Selznick/Hitchcock mindsets. Though *REBECCA*'s main theme ultimately reveals itself as a knockout, related to and utilized in a manner similar to the "Bride" motif in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935), the score as a whole nonetheless seems to fall in the second category; for me, repeated listenings were necessary in order to absorb its latent richness. After a swirlingly tempestuous "Main Title," brilliantly evocative of the mystery/romance it preludes, the score simmers for some time before reaching boiling-point again. There are 124 minutes of music in the 2.10 film, and Marco Polo gives us 72. As the disk is organized chronologically, the slow start is partially due to the structure of the film itself: The opening Monte Carlo sequence (nearly the first quarter of the film) is scored with lyrical but fairly neutral source music, the salon music, and waltzes heard in the hotel where Olivier meets Fontaine, and with the cues underscoring their whirlwind courtship.

The first stirring of the score's major motifs is the love theme, heard briefly just after Olivier proposes to Fontaine in his hotel suite ("Proposal Scene/Marriage/Arrival in Manderley") after which things rev up again. This theme is developed throughout the score, notably in the charming, but soon ominous 7.14 "Beach/Boathouse" sequence, and contrasts with the more seductive Rebecca theme which is first heard in the "Main Title," then held in reserve until the Manderley sequences.

Like most Golden Age films, *REBECCA* is profusely underscored, and Selznick musically fleshed out the film with cues from previous Waxman scores and even with similar inserts from Max Steiner, a practice not uncommon in early Hollywood. An example is "Entrance Hall/Mrs. Danvers," adapted from previous Waxman cues, but also integrating the Rebecca theme as

Fontaine gets her first inkling of the pervasive presence at Manderley of DeWinter's deceased first wife from the still-devoted Mrs. Danvers (Judith Anderson). Most of the score was performed from orchestral parts copied from the Waxman/Selznick archives, but this particular cue did not exist and so was reconstructed for the CD from the soundtrack and from Waxman's original written notes. It's a fascinating cue, revealing Waxman's rare ability to delineate character and psychology within the split-second timing shifts of the film medium, while still creating a fluid, musically cohesive sequence. The CD eschews most non-Waxman cues, so we skip ahead to another eerie take, "Morning Room," in which Fontaine again finds herself confronting the dominating spirit of the dead Rebecca. New on the CD is "Beatrice," a rejected Waxman cue which here replaces the Steiner take used in the film.

From the standpoint of authenticity, Swiss-born conductor Adriano seems to favor a more expansive symphonic mode than is heard in the film. The style seems compatible with Waxman's lush romantic/impressionistic cues, and the sound is well recorded and more full-bodied than on some recent CDs. However, the magisterial tone sometimes does seem to add weight to music performed with a lighter touch in the film. For instance, the "Entrance Hall" cue omits the brass mutes used in the original (so the cue now suggests that Fontaine and Olivier might be about to enter the prize song contest in "Die Meistersinger" rather than Manderley), the newly grandiose style also undercutting the subtle Hitchcockian humor of the harassed and rain-drenched Fontaine's intimidating initial meeting with Manderley's imposing domestic staff. The expansive orchestral sound mostly works well, however, with individual solo instru-

ments more cleanly defined than in the film. The individual listener's reaction to this CD version will no doubt be geared by how devoutly puristic he or she feels about the original film soundtrack style.

What doesn't work quite so well are the novachord sections. A (now obsolete) keyboard that was something like a Hammond organ, the novachord was a popular pre-theremin aural signifier of the eerie, quaint, and bizarre. Waxman used it in *BRIDE*, and it can be clearly heard in the "Pink Elephants" sequence in Disney's *DUMBO* (1941). Adriano's novachord approximation seems to have a DX7 sound: bubbly, a bit hard-edged, lacking the mushy, somewhat tacky, but undeniably eerie impact of the original. Since the novachord parts are such a crucial element in establishing the tone of the Rebecca theme in many cues, the somewhat '80s sound is an intrusively jarring element in an otherwise good production. The REBECCA score is pretty indestructible, however, and I'm sure repeated hearings will reveal even more to savor on this interesting reconstruction.

Spring and summer '95 brought a variety of Golden Age film music reissues to CD, not all of them geared to *Scarlet Street's* mystery/horror format. Or are they? Let's take a closer look.

Capitol has finally reissued Alex North's *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE* (1951) on CD (Capitol CDP 0777 7 95597 2.5). North's music for the film of Tennessee Williams' best drama is one of the landmark scores of all time, and the album was one of the first commercially successful soundtrack releases. The original album tracks, reproduced on this CD, make up a cohesively-edited version of the score as assembled from various points (not always chronological) in the film, but still roughly following the dramatic action. North's score was one of the first to fuse an authentic form of jazz (though every note is written down) with an intimate but often blistering mode of orchestral underscoring rooted in 20th-century concert techniques. On top of it all, the composer was a gifted melodist who made whatever styles he touched

and/or fused original and appealing. He was also one of the first to pioneer a scaled-down "less-is-more" instrumentation, probably a carry-over from his experience scoring live New York theater. One musical cue was even censored and cut from the film (though it was recently restored) and *STREETCAR* has some of the sexiest music ever to singe a piece of manuscript paper. At the recording session, a female cellist was said to have commented: "Oh, Alex, such bedroom music!" but it is also such moving, dramatic, and horrific music. The celebrated "Flores para los Muertos" ("Flowers for the Dead") cue for the appearance of the old Spanish flower-vendor (which marks Blanche's premonition of death, visualized in a sequence straight out of *I*

doubtful that any new version can duplicate the sound and feel of this original, which features such vintage jazz players as Buddy Cole, Babe Russin, and Ziggy Elman, and the Warner orchestra at its peak. It's unfortunate that Capitol did not lavish more attention on the remastering, as some of the sound, particularly in the string/orchestral tracks, seems a bit pinched and abrasive.

I've heard this score countless times, and did a detailed study of it for the Library of Congress, yet each time I come back to *STREETCAR* I seem to hear some subtle permutation of the musical motifs, and find fresh insights into how North's "emotional statements" illuminate and define Williams' characters and dramatic structure. There are film composers, and there are composers who also work in films, and they are not necessarily the same thing. North is simply the greatest in both categories, and *STREETCAR* remains one of the greatest scores in a career full of such work.

Two outstanding reissues on the new Turner/Rhino label are *MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS* (1944) and *ZIEGFELD FOLLIES* (1946). It's the first original soundtrack of *ST. LOUIS* (initially released as a Decca 78 rpm cover set) and even includes some underscoring, and it's the first recorded version ever of *FOLLIES*. Both scores have been remastered in great-sounding stereo. It seems MGM recorded its soundtracks in an early form of multitrack, and these musical "stems" closely miked tracks of brass, chorus, or what-not, which were originally used for a balanced mono mix—have now been mastered into highly serviceable stereo, not at all like that phony electronic reprocess-

ing sometimes applied to mono recordings in the '50s.

ZIEGFELD FOLLIES was the biggest of MGM's big musicals of the mid '40s, a plotless, insanely cinematic homage to the stage shows of the great Ziegfeld (sort of MGM's *FANTASIA*), and featuring every star in the studio's musical heaven. It was also something of a fantastic folly in itself, as famous for Vincente Minnelli's "bubbles out of control" finale (about which the director ulti-



Fred Astaire and Lucille Bremer

WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE!) is one of the most innovative horror cues ever composed, aptly mirroring the heroine's final plunge into madness, and forming the peak moment of North's brilliant musical evocation of high Southern Gothic Williams.

This reissue may have been rushed into circulation to beat Jerry Goldsmith's new digital rerecording due out this fall. While there is much music in *STREETCAR* that will benefit from a new recording, it's also

A STUDY IN TERROR

An Appreciation by Richard Valley

The 1960s was a decade in which heroes were in short supply. Assassinations, war, racial tensions, sexual discrimination, student unrest—is it any wonder that millions sought escape in the larger-than-life exploits of a crimefighter extravagantly garbed in cape and eccentric headgear?

And is it any wonder that the American publicity machine for Columbia Pictures' *A STUDY IN TERROR* sought to cash in on the phenomenal popularity of television's *BATMAN* by turning Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's venerable Sherlock Holmes into a Victorian caped crusader, complete with assorted "bams," "biffs," "pows," and "aieees" adorning its print material? After all, Holmes wore a cape (of sorts), and his deerstalker hat, while hardly as great a fashion risk as Bruce Wayne's batcowl, was still far from ordinary.

It didn't work, of course.

A STUDY IN TERROR was not much of a success in the States, certainly, it didn't do nearly as well here as it did in other corners of the world where, devoid of such tag lines as "He's James Bond in a cape! He's Batman with brains!" the ad campaign bespoke of a certain respect for the world's greatest detective.

Truth to tell, the publicity mill may not have damaged *A STUDY*'s chances at all; the few Holmes mysteries that followed it to the big screen—*THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1970), *SHERLOCK HOLMES' SMARTER BROTHER* (1975), *THE SEVENPERCENT SOLUTION* (1976), *MURDER BY DECREE*

(1979), *YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES* (1985), and *WITHOUT A CLUE* (1988)—were moderate moneymakers at best, and, in most instances, outright failures. It may simply have been that time—at least time spent at the movies—had passed the Great Detective by.

If Sherlock Holmes' movie heyday is long past, there are still those who turn time and again to the classic films that once graced the silver screen: the silent shorts with Eille Norwood, the British series starring Arthur Wontner, the lavish 20th Century Fox productions and Universal programmers that forever wed the names of Holmes and Basil Rathbone, the Hammer thriller with Peter Cushing—and *A STUDY IN TERROR*, in which John Neville, with one film, firmly stamped his name on the "A" list of Holmes portrayers.

A dark, dingy, rain-soaked byway in London's poverty-stricken Whitechapel district. A man quietly approaches an attractive young streetwalker.

"Hello, darlin'," purrs the girl. "Like a bit of fun?"

Moments later, she is lying dead on the pavement, a knife through her lovely throat like a pin through a bonnet.

Time passes. A prostitute named Polly Nichols (Christine Maybach) has a run-in with the owner of the Angel & Crown pub, a beefy foreigner named Max Steiner (Peter Carsten). When Steiner tosses Polly in the gutter and threatens her, the feisty hooker has a chilling retort all prepared:



LEFT: The Duke of Shires (Barry Jones) identifies a medical case for Sherlock Holmes (John Neville) and Dr. Watson (Donald Houston). RIGHT: Lord Carfax (John Fraser) is no stranger to surgical instruments.

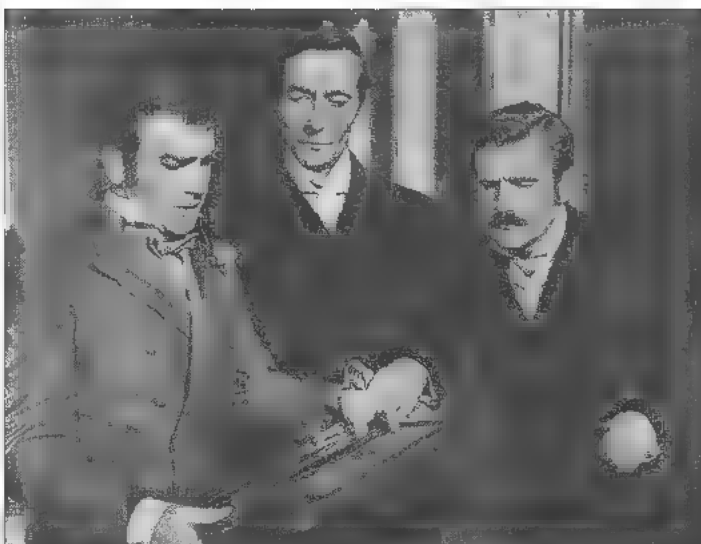
"Have me carved, will you? The way you did poor Emma Smith?"

Minutes later, Polly is the second victim of Jack the Ripper, her mutilated body floating in a water trough whose contents have thickened with blood.

A *STUDY IN TERROR* wastes no time putting Saucy Jack to work on the women of Whitechapel, but Ripperologists looking for an accurate recreation of the notorious crimes—or even an accurate portrayal of the victims—are bound to be disappointed.

To its credit, *A STUDY IN TERROR* gets the names right: Emma Smith (no young beauty, but a 45-year-old widow) was at one time believed to be the first victim of Jack the Ripper. If the film ignores most facts concerning the murders, variations do creep into the story: No victim was ever found with a knife piercing her throat, but Emma died after being savagely attacked in Osborn Street and having what was described as "a blunt instrument" thrust into her vagina. (Surely it is no coincidence that Osborn Street and the titled family of *A STUDY IN TERROR* share the same name.)

Polly Nichols, too, was a beneficiary of the Ripper's peculiar skills, but no victim was ever found



submerged in a trough. Again, though, there is a link to the facts: After one of the murders, a bloodied trough, in which the killer had presumably tried to wash away evidence of his crime, was reportedly discovered. (Interestingly, the trough doesn't figure in the actual screenplay; instead, it is Polly, not the Ripper's first victim, who gets it in the neck.)

Donald and Derek Ford's script for *A STUDY IN TERROR* tags each streetwalker with an appropriate name (Emma, Polly, Annie Chapman, Catherine Eddowes, Liz Stride, and Mary Kelly are all present), but the movie itself rarely identifies the women, and one of them ("Kate" Eddowes, played by a properly seedy Kay Walsh) even manages to survive the carnage!

Ripperologists may turn with disdain from *A STUDY IN TERROR*, but they do so at their own peril. The movie, for all its revisionism, is still more accurate than any of the Ripper films that preceded it. For those with even a passing knowledge of the case, it's something of a ghoulish game to see what the Fords have torn from the record and reshaped for the screen.

Continued on page 72

LEFT: As usual, Inspector Lestrade (Frank Finlay) is eager to accept the unofficial aid of Sherlock Holmes. RIGHT: Holmes persuades Dr. Murray (Anthony Quayle) to take him to Michael Osborne (John Cairney)



New Masks For

by Lelia Loban

JACK THE RIPPER

Jack the Ripper terrorized the London slum of Whitechapel in 1888 by murdering destitute streetwalkers. He probably strangled them first, then slashed their throats. When he had enough time, he disemboweled the women and took away souvenirs (or snacks?) such as the heart, the uterus, or a kidney. These cases, never solved, have provided Ripperologists with a hundred years of wholesome entertainment. The three books reviewed here present some of the latest theories about the Ripper's identity.

Philip Sugden offers the best book of the three in *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper* (Carroll & Graf, 1994). "Previous writers have almost always tailored the facts to suit a theory," Sugden complains. He has the advantage, because it's easier to debunk someone else's hypothesis than to defend one's own. Sugden demolishes a number of theories (including *The Diary*), but doesn't offer his own conjecture. He does say that George Chapman, the only known and convicted serial killer among the usual suspects, is the least unlikely candidate. However, he then raises serious objections to identifying Chapman as the Ripper.

To strip the case down to the primary evidence, free of secondary source rumors, hoaxes, and errors, Sugden focuses on the original police records, including those newly made public in 1987. Sugden sympathizes with the police and respects their efforts more than the average Ripperologist. He concludes that "there was no single police view on the subject . . . Indeed, just about every detective in the CID, even those who took no part in the Whitechapel investigation, seems at one time or another to have had a pet theory on the identity of Jack the Ripper." This book, with its cautious reasoning, historical context, and overview of the case, is a good starting point for the budding Ripperologist.

The Diary of Jack the Ripper (Gryphon/Hyperion, 1993) comes billed as the secret journal of James Maybrick, a mild-mannered businessman but also an arsenic and strychnine addict, who died in a Liverpool suburb in 1889. His wife, convicted of poisoning him (though she was possibly framed), later went free and moved to the States. This book is the first to tag Maybrick as the Ripper.

Shirley Harrison, author of the 200-page opening narrative about the finding and authentication of *The Diary*, is a professional writer, but not an established Ripperologist. Her literary agent invited her into the project when an unemployed seaman, Mike Barrett, presented the handwritten diary. This female reviewer couldn't help rooting for Harrison, because Ripperology has been almost exclusively a boys' club. Unfortunately, Harrison comes across as, at best, gullible. Her narrative is disorganized, redundant, and full of circular reasoning.

Barrett claimed a friend gave him the manuscript, without divulging its source. The friend subsequently died. A watch, engraved as the property of James Maybrick, soon appeared in a dealer's shop. An inscription scratched inside the watch confessed, "I am Jack."

Scared off by this dubious provenance and by prepublication rumblings of "hoax," Warner Books cancelled publication in August 1993. This Hyperion edition supplies a transcript and a facsimile, hard to read because of blurry reproduction in reduced size. The handwriting doesn't look Victorian. The book includes an essay by Kenneth W. Rendell stating unequivocally that the diary "is a hoax." British publisher Robert Smith (of Smith Gryphon Ltd.) supplies an essay defending the diary. Documents experts Sue Iremonger and Dr. Nicholas Eastaugh, among others, examined the manuscript, although nobody had time for elaborate forensic studies before publication.

Defenders of the diary crow that it's penned with chemically appropriate iron-gall ink in an authentic, "rare" Victorian blank book (a scrapbook with heavy, absorbent paper, however, not a diary book). Someone has removed the first 20 pages (40 counting fronts and backs) with their contents. A new, not yet perfected ion migration test on the ink seems to indicate a date of around 1921, give or take several years, which would make the diary a fraud but the present purveyors its victims. However, at present, there's no reliable equivalent to carbon dating for documents created this recently.

A hoaxer's most difficult problems have to do with the handwriting, language, and content of the





document, not acquisition of authentic Victorian paper, pen, ink, and so forth, all readily available at London collectibles markets such as Burmondsey and the Portobello Road. In any case, the reader need not wait for complete forensic testing, since the text of this diary reveals it as a fiction, whatever its actual age.

Among other factual mistakes, the diarist describes arranging the two farthings the police supposedly found at the feet of Annie Chapman's corpse. Whoops! The police did not find coins with the body. As Philip Sugden and Melvin Harris explain in their books, the coins are the maudlin invention of a Victorian journalist who romanticized the crime scene and thus misled a long line of Ripperologists.

Kenneth Rendell points out that, "... highly unusual phrases and expressions that first appeared in 1888 in a letter signed 'Jack the Ripper,' sent to a London newspaper, widely published since, are used throughout the diary. The diary is thus inexorably linked to that letter. All comparisons of the two handwritings conclude they are written by different people." He elaborates that, "if the letter is written by Jack the Ripper, then the diary, which copies its language but does not match its handwriting, must be forged. If the 1888 letter is a hoax of the time, then the diary must still be a hoax since it copies its language but does not match its handwriting." The investigation aside, the murder confessions aren't well written enough to do justice to this intrinsically fascinating story. Still, with a good scriptwriter, *The Diary* could make an entertaining film. (Indeed, check *THE NEWS HOUND* on page 18 for the first word of the proposed film version.)

The True Face of Jack the Ripper (Michael O'Mara Books Ltd., 1995), by legitimate Ripperologist Melvin Harris, will appeal to Scarlet Readers with its mixture of detection and the occult. Harris defends the suspicion of Vittoria Cremers that her acquaintance, Roslyn D'Onston Stephenson, was Jack. (Author Harris now owns the rights to Cremers' memoirs, which she dictated in the 1930s.) D'Onston, as he usually

called himself, had an affair with Cremers' friend, novelist Mabel Collins. Cremers moved in with Collins and the creepy-quiet D'Onston more than a year after the last Ripper murder.

All three were occultists in the bohemian circle of Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society. D'Onston trained as a doctor in the United States, fought beside Garibaldi in Italy, had a scandalous affair with a prostitute, alienated his wealthy family, and claimed in print that he had slain a witch in the Cameroons. He drank heavily and abused drugs. Nominally a journalist, he supplemented this meager income by sponging off his friends.

During the 10-week period of the five most certain Ripper murders (Ripperologists disagree about the number), D'Onston was a patient in a hospital within convenient walking distance of the crimes. He checked in with an easily-faked neurotic complaint and was fully ambulatory. While hospitalized, he wrote a Ripperologist letter to the police and published an article detailing a bizarre theory, full of hints pointing to himself, that a French sorcerer had committed the murders as part of a black magic ritual. Harris opines that D'Onston felt "a need to talk about the murders," but did so in a way that would appear to be fantasy, thus "shielding himself from too close a scrutiny." The police investigated D'Onston, decided he was a crackpot, and abandoned him as a suspect.

This wild story, like that of *The Diary*, would make a terrific movie (no word yet), though Harris' prose style is bombastic. Harris proves that D'Onston was a coldblooded, clever, sadistic sociopath, who professed little regard for human life. He dropped hints that he might have murdered his wife and that he might also be the Ripper. While Harris rehabilitates D'Onston as a legitimate suspect, he can't prove that D'Onston really was Jack.

Harris reports speculations as if they were facts and connects events that may have nothing to do with each other. Harris depends heavily on Vittoria Cre-



mers as a source, but her reliability seems questionable, especially since she dictated her memoirs about 40 years after the events she relates. According to Cremers, D'Onston confessed or boasted to Mabel Collins that he was Jack. He claimed he had carried souvenir body parts home between his generously-proportioned bohemian necktie and his shirt. He tantalized the inquisitive and paranoid Cremers with tales of the strongbox he kept locked in his room. Snooping, she discovered his secret cache of neckties, stiff with a coagulated substance, she said.

But was the substance blood? Was it human blood? Was it specifically the blood of the Ripper's victims? One can imagine the malicious D'Onston fabricating clues, leading Cremers to them, then enjoying a laugh at the expense of these credulous women. Without forensic testing, such "evidence" described long after the fact is unconvincing.

Harris too lightly dismisses points that contradict his theories. For instance, D'Onston claimed in print that his editor, W. T. Stead of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, told him that the police found semen in the rectum of victim Mary Kelly. Unable to find any corroboration that the Ripper buggered Kelly, Harris says that the police must have suppressed this information in their written reports. Such labored reasoning weakens his case. Still, this book makes entertaining reading. Detective fiction buffs will enjoy dissecting the case and pouncing on the many logical flaws.

The most empathetic and humane account of the Ripper's victims and the Whitechapel slum is still Donald Rumbelow's *The Complete Jack the Ripper* (New York Graphic Society, 1975), although in some other respects it's now outdated. Like most of the Ripper books before them, all three of those reviewed here dwell almost exclusively on Saucy Jack himself and on the minutiae of the evidence. Of course, all the writers apply socially acceptable adjectives of enthralled disgust to describe the crimes: gruesome, perverted, monstrous. The words echo the newsboy calling out, "Another murder! 'Orrible

mutilations!" Lingering over such material can make the reader numb. The prostitutes, seen only in black and white police photographs and impersonal newspaper sketches, become barely human, pieces of a puzzle, characters in a murder mystery, collections of body parts.

But they were human. They were Polly Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Kate Eddowes, and Mary Kelly.



According to Ripperologist Melvin Harris, the True Face of Jack the Ripper belongs to Roslyn D'Onston Stephenson (pictured on page 69), but there are many more candidates for the position. Pictured left to right above are James Kenneth Stephen, tutor (and perhaps more) to the Duke of Clarence; "Eddy," the Duke of Clarence himself; Sir William Gull, royal physician and one of the most popular suspects of recent years, thanks in large part to the 1979 Sherlock Holmes film MURDER BY DECREE; James Maybrick, who has The Diary of Jack the Ripper to thank for his place on the list of suspects; Montague James Druitt, whose suicide coincided with the last of the Whitechapel murders (his resemblance to FULL HOUSE star Bob Saget should not be held against him); and Severin Klosowski (alias George Chapman), who, if he is the Ripper, gave up carving for a career poisoning his supposed wives. Was one of these men the most infamous serial killer in history? It's possible—perhaps probable—but it's doubtful that anyone will ever know for certain.



Though she is smart enough to keep off the streets, Mary Kelly (Edina Ronay) makes the fatal mistake of inviting Jack the Ripper (John Fraser) into her rooms—particularly her **STUDY IN TERROR!**

A STUDY IN TERROR

Continued from page 68

Of course, there may be one stretch of the imagination that Ripperologists are unwilling to take—and that is the presence of a certain consulting detective and his stalwart companion.

Sherlock Holmes is already solving a mystery when first he makes his appearance in *A STUDY IN TERROR*: the disappearance, not of Lady Frances Carfax, but of his pipe. (He finds it tucked under Dr. Watson.)

The film quickly establishes a Holmes (John Neville) who is a rather youthful bundle of energy and a Watson (Donald Houston) who, while still slow on the uptake, is not quite the bumbling buffoon popularized by Nigel Bruce in the Rathbone pictures. It gives the master sleuth a series of deductions to make—first concerning his pipe's whereabouts, and then about the newspaper Watson is reading (detailing the latest Ripper atrocity). Oddly, the scene ends with Holmes proclaiming, "And now! Whitechapel!"—but when next we see him he is still puttering about Baker Street. (The script indicates that he is to take the paper from Watson, showing that he is now "involved" in the case, but the action never makes it to the screen.)

Instead, it's time for another killing!

A STUDY IN TERROR's third murder sequence is the longest and most elaborate in the film, and the one

that draws deepest from the true facts in the case (if not specifically the facts of the murder in question). It is a vignette, taking us deep into London's slums.

Annie Chapman (better known as "Dark Annie") was not the petite, good-humored blonde played so winningly in the movie by Barbara Windsor, but a 47-year-old prostitute whose luck had all but run out. The character appears to have been based more on Elizabeth Stride than Annie, since "Long Liz" was well liked and considered a good sport by her cronies.

Annie Chapman was walking the streets on the night of her death because she had spent her lodgings money on beer. (In *STUDY*, Annie has frittered away her meager funds on a new bonnet; in fact, it was Polly Nichols who had purchased the frivolous headgear.) Next to the unfortunate woman's body was found a piece of leather apron. (In *STUDY*, Annie tries to sell her wares to a friendly butcher named Chunky; in fact, it was thought that the Ripper might be a butcher, and a local Whitechapel loony known as Leather Apron was at one time suspected of the crimes.)

None of this is used as a means to decipher the Ripper's identity in *A STUDY IN TERROR*. Instead, when we return to Baker Street (after a brief sojourn with Inspector Lestrade, played to rat-faced perfection by Frank Finlay), we find that Sherlock Holmes has literally received a caseload of clues in the post!

Continued on page 98

Sherlock Holmes Meets Ellery Queen

by Richard Valley

The old voice trembled. "Mr. Queen, he did not do it. He was not the Ripper!"

—*A Study in Terror*

Everyone knows the identity of Jack the Ripper in the 1966 film *A STUDY IN TERROR*. It was Lord Carfax, who, obsessed with protecting the honor of the family name and outraged by his brother Michael's marriage to a common prostitute, sought to exorcise his shame by eliminating every whore on the streets. That's who it was, right?

Wrong!

It was another gent entirely! And that's not all—in the film, Sherlock Holmes single-handedly tracked down the most notorious killer of his time, but in a certain novel it took the combined skills of both Holmes and Ellery Queen to bring the fiend to heel!

Even Herman Cohen, *A STUDY IN TERROR*'s executive producer, had no idea that his celluloid Holmes had (apparently) caught the wrong man. "We wanted to get a book deal, of course, and Lancer Books came up with the idea for a novelization by Ellery Queen. I never read it, so I never knew that they changed anything."

Actually, they ("they" being Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, the Brooklyn-born cousins who wrote as Ellery Queen) changed quite a bit. In this, the 35th Queen mystery (only five more would follow), the authors initiated what would become a cottage industry in ensuing decades: namely, a particular form of Sherlockian pastiche, in which a long-lost manuscript by Holmes' biographer, Dr. John H. Watson, turns up unexpectedly.

Though the most popular novel to make use of this premise is unquestionably Nicholas Meyer's *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (1974), Queen had the advantage in being able to offer two detectives for the price of one. (And the price of one must have been pretty damn cheap, since in *A Study in Terror* you got two for 60 cents!) He also had a top-drawer screenplay by Donald and Derek Ford from which to draw inspiration.

Actually, the script may have proven more a problem than a boon. Unlike the Fords, who could cut away from Holmes and Watson to follow Jack the Ripper on his nightly prowls through Whitechapel,

Queen adhered strictly to the rules. Watson's manuscript is written in the first person, and any event at which the good doctor is not present remains undramatized. The Ellery Queen chapters and interruptions (and here "Ellery Queen" refers to the writer/detective in the stories, not the boys from Brooklyn), in keeping with the style of the Queen series, are written in the third person. It's all something of a (Roman) hat trick, and the ol' Maestro manages to pull it off brilliantly.

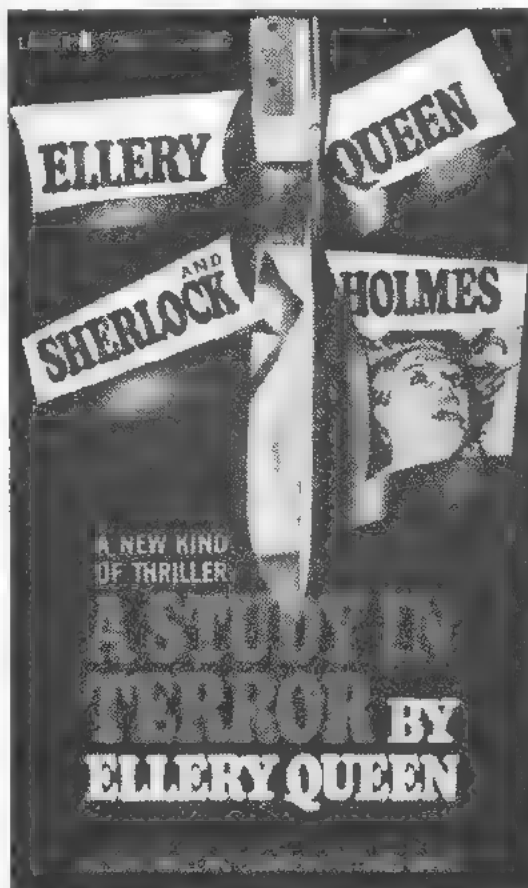
Queen departs frequently from the screenplay, adding and subtracting characters, changing names (Max Steiner becomes Max Klein), giving Lord Carfax a young daughter of about nine, establishing that

Watson's wife (never mentioned in the movie) is away, moving Shire House from London to the moors of Baskerville country, making splendid use of the Baker Street Irregulars to find Joseph Beck's pawn shop (precisely what Holmes would have done), taking the Baker Street duo to the Diogenes Club for a consultation with Mycroft Holmes (which is far more likely a happenstance than having Mycroft descend upon Baker Street), checking up on the criminal activities of Professor James Moriarty, and overall making the narrative as authentically "Watsonian" as possible.

Meanwhile, in the "present day" of 1966, a millionaire chum of Ellery's tries to track down the woman who placed the manuscript in his car with the scrawled message: "Please deliver to Ellery Queen." The friend doesn't succeed, but presently the modern master receives a telephone call from an elderly woman, a woman who could easily be 90 years old....

A Study in Terror's cleverest touch is that it basically offers the same solution to the crimes as does the movie on which it is based, then hints that Sherlock Holmes knew that this solution was false but decided not to tell Watson the truth (which means that the truth is not revealed in Watson's manuscript), then finally offers Ellery Queen a crack at deducing what Holmes knew but was determined to keep a secret. Yes, the truth wins out. The novelization reveals that both Sherlock Holmes in 1888 and Ellery Queen in 1966 knew that Jack the Ripper was really....

Hey, I can keep a secret, too!





HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER MOVIE

HERMAN COHEN

interviewed by Jessie Lilley

In the mid-1960s, producer Herman Cohen abandoned his friends of earlier days—his teenage werewolves and Frankensteins, his vampires in a girls' dormitory, his crazed true-crime authors, his murderous zoo-keepers, his man-eating plants and giant gorillas.

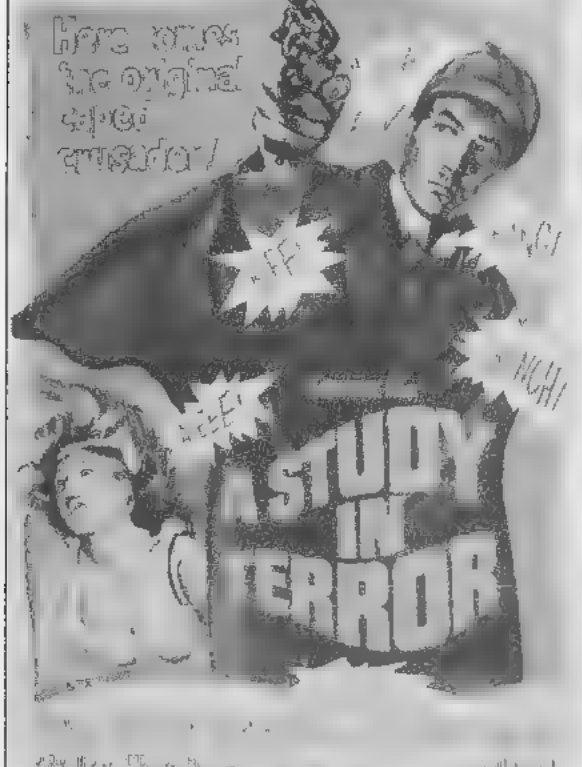
Gone, too, were such toys as a pair of binoculars that poke out the user's eyes, the ice tongs, the portable guillotine . . .

It was time to branch out and meet new friends . . . friends like Jack the Ripper.

A *STUDY IN TERROR* (1966) was the motion picture that first pitted the fictional Sherlock Holmes against the all too genuine Ripper, and it is still widely considered to be one of the best Holmes mysteries ever committed to celluloid. It is also considered to be Cohen's best movie—especially by those whose taste for teen terrors is somewhat limited.

Herman Cohen is justifiably proud of *A STUDY IN TERROR*. In this final installment of *Scarlet Street's* three-part interview with the titan of terror, he clears away the fog surrounding the making of this stylish and polished production . . .

SHERLOCK HOLMES MEETS JACK THE RIPPER!



The difference between the American and British advertising campaigns for *A STUDY IN TERROR* was determined by one factor alone: the astonishing popularity of the *BATMAN* TV series in the States. **NEXT PAGE:** The Amazing Colossal Cohen poses on a miniature *KONGA* (1961) set.

cation that we had for the Duke's home—that was the Osterly estate, which is a national historical home. They came and had lunch with us there, then they came on location at Shepperton Studios a couple of times. Adrian Conan Doyle was—well, let's face it; he lived off his father all his life. He had a magnificent home in Switzerland, because the taxes in England were so rough, so he could only come back to England so many days a year.

JL: Where else did you shoot?

HC: We shot at the wharf, we shot in Whitechapel itself—in the crowd scene with Anthony Quayle. In fact, I always do a Hitchcock in all my pictures, I was one of the crowd in that big fight scene with Anthony Quayle. (Laughs) In costume and everything! I always do my bit in all my pictures. We built the pub for the opening of the picture; we built that at Shepperton.

JL: It's a beautiful set. It almost seems too attractive to be in Whitechapel.

HC: I had a marvelous art director. His name was Alex Vetchinsky. He worked for Sam Spiegel on pictures; he was between films at the time and we got along very well. I got

James Hill, who had just completed *BORN FREE*, to direct. And I had a hell of a cast.

JL: Yes, indeed!

HC: John Neville, Donald Houston, John Fraser, Anthony Quayle, Barbara Windsor, Robert Morley, Georgia Brown....

JL: Did you cast the picture yourself?

HC: I did all the casting with a wonderful casting director, a great gal who worked with me in all my films in casting: Maude Spector. Don't forget this was a very low-budget film. It looks pretty lush; in fact, Stanley Schneider and Mike Frankovich, who were the heads of production at Columbia at that time, used *A STUDY IN TERROR* to show their new producers and executives how to make a film and use ingenuity in place of money.

JL: How did you choose John Neville to play Sherlock Holmes?

HC: Well, at that time, John Neville was the managing and artistic director of a theater in Nottingham, The Nottingham Playhouse. I had seen him in a few plays in London, and I thought that he would be ideal for Sherlock—even though I'd worked with Michael Gough, who I

liked very much. But this was one picture I didn't put Michael in, because he was in my modern horror films. He was in *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* and *BLACK ZOO*; he was in *BERSERK*. So I didn't put Michael in *STUDY*, and he was very unhappy. (Laughs) Getting Robert Morley to play Sherlock's brother was a challenge. We all sat around, saying, "Gee, he would be so good." Everybody was afraid to go to see him. And I just went to his home! (Laughs) Hired him!

JL: Just rang the bell and said, "Hi."

HC: Yeah, I did. Really. And he happened to be home. I also had an entree because his son-in-law, Robert Hardy, was in *BERSERK*; he played the Scotland Yard detective. Anyway, I was able to get Robert Morley because I booked him for one week. We did all his scenes in one week, because he was going to start a play. He was a great character, Morley.

JL: What about Jack the Ripper? Do you have your own theory concerning his identity?

HC: Yes, I do, because we spoke to several Scotland Yard inspectors who I knew from doing *HORRORS*

course, we had to do in one take. I said, 'Well, I'll take it. I'll direct it. Put the

HC: Oh, yes, of course. WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF. I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN, BLOOD OF DRACULA, and HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER were black and white. We

Elia Pinaric put things more solidly into the air and press of success. James Nicholson, who was the president of American International Pictures, and I are now very good friends. Years before we got together for Jack Broderick, who got my first job. I was his assistant, associate, what have you—to give me all kinds of titles in need of money. (Laughs) We did a lot of pictures: BRIDE OF THE GORILLA, BELA LUGOSI MEETS A BROOKLYN GORILLA, THE BUSH WHACKERS, starring John Ireland, Rayne Moore, and Dorothy Malone, BATTLES OF CHIEF PONTIAC with Lee Remick, and Lon Chaney, Jr., which American International turned down. I had wanted to go to Columbia with him, but he wanted me to be his partner, but I was tired. I had a film picture idea with Daniel F. Wheeler, the Bank Robbers, and I got James Nicholson to put the picture in release. THE EAST AND THE FURIOUS with Lee Remick and Dorothy Malone.





LEFT: Director James Hill wasn't too happy when his deerstalkered executive producer took the helm during *A STUDY IN TERROR*'s fiery finale. **RIGHT:** John Neville and Herman Cohen scan the *STUDY IN TERROR* script for clues.

with Aben Kandel, *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*, based on Scotland Yard's Black Museum. AIP didn't have the money to do big-budget pictures, so I tied in with a company in England called Anglo-Amalgamated. It was headed by Nat Cohen and Stuart Levy. No relation to me.

JL: I was going to ask if you were keeping it in the family.

HC: No, no relation. I first met Nat when he came over to the States with Jimmy Carreras, looking to see if he could get an American partner. I tied in with him on some pictures called *GHOST SHIP* and *UNDERCOVER AGENT*. They're hardly ever mentioned today, but they were both successful. I must say that there are two producers whose every picture at least broke even, and that's myself and Roger Corman. Knock on wood....

JL: It should only continue

HC: Yes! (Laughs) Anyway, the teen age cycle was playing out, and AIP started doing the beach party pictures, and I wanted to do *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* in color and scope—so I got half the money from American International and half from Anglo-Amalgamated in England. And really, that's how we did *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*.

JL: And that's what gave you the connections in England to make *A STUDY IN TERROR*?

HC: When I was going to make *A STUDY IN TERROR*, *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* is the picture that I showed the Conan Doyle people. They flipped over it. So, *A STUDY IN TERROR* was a big picture for me at that time.

JL: The film has a unique musical score by John Scott.

HC: It was his first film, I want you to know. He did a short for Cinerama, which I saw at the Cinerama Theater in London. The music was just fantastic, and I found out who the composer was. I met him, listened to some of his music in his home, and signed him to do *A STUDY IN TERROR*. John Scott did *BERSERK*, he did *TROG*, and he did *CROOKS AND CORONETS*, which was a Warner Brothers comedy with Telly Savalas, Dame Edith Evans, Warren Oates, and Cesar Romero—I always had a great time working with John Scott, because music was sort of my minor in school. I love music. I know how important it is, and I always worked very closely with my composers.

JL: So you got on well...?

HC: Oh, John and I got along just great. We would sit at the piano in his home and run the film, and we'd go over the instrumentation that he wanted to use. We had fun working together, deciding where there should be music and where there shouldn't be music. As I say, *A STUDY IN TERROR* was the first

score that he did for any film, and I'm happy to say that he's been working a hell of a lot since.

JL: The contrast between the film's ad campaigns in England and the States is absolutely amazing.

HC: Oh, I was furious about the campaign here in the States!

JL: They called Sherlock Holmes the original Caped Crusader, and tried to compare him with Batman, who was then a big hit on TV.

HC: I'll tell you: We handled it very seriously in England. We had a big opening in Leicester Square, a big premiere, and it did terrific business in England—which it did not do here, by the way. *A STUDY IN TERROR* was not one of my big pictures in the States.

JL: Perhaps if it had been advertised properly....

HC: Well, you hit it on the head. It was not only poorly advertised, it had the wrong title as far as I was concerned. When Bob Ferguson, who was in charge of advertising at Columbia at the time, was doing the American campaign, I was tied up preparing *BERSERK* with Joan Crawford in London. When I flew to New York and they showed me the campaign—"Here comes the original Caped Crusader! Pow! Crunch! Bang!" and all that crap—I was furious! They said, "Look, *BATMAN* is so big now. We think

Continued on page 109

Our Man on Baker Street

by David Stuart Davies

The Final Problem

It is with a heavy heart that I take up my pen to record the recent revelations on Baker Street. I can state categorically that Mr. Jeremy Brett will no more don the mantle of that dark angel, Sherlock Holmes. We knew that *THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* was supposed to be Granada's last series and that Brett's health had been less than good, but fans being fans we hoped, wished—prayed, even—that there would be a turnaround: Granada would change their mind, Brett would return to full health and be persuaded to detect again. 'Fraid not.

Jeremy learned earlier this year that his heart problem was more serious than he had thought. The strain of a serious boyhood illness was exacerbated by the effect of the drugs he took to stabilize his mental condition following the death of his second wife in the 1980s. His heart is so weak, now, that it will be impossible for him to take on the strain of a leading role ever again.

"For God's sake, don't say that Sherlock did this to me. Whatever role I'd been playing, the result

would have been the same," he told me over the telephone one cool evening in April. "It is just an unfortunate medical condition. It has taken me a while to come to terms with the fact that I'll never take a lead again, but my spirits are high and who knows what is round the next corner."

His spirits are certainly buoyant, but one suspects that he is hiding his wounds bravely. Certainly those of us who saw Jeremy Brett in his glory days as Sherlock Holmes can but mourn this great loss.

A full interview with Jeremy Brett will appear in the Fall Issue of *Scarlet Street*.

Meaner Streets

Away from Baker Street, in other avenues, Granada are doing very well. Robbie Coltrane recently won a BAFTA award for his role as the whiskey swilling psychiatrist in the series *CRACKER*. Presently filming the third series, Coltrane observed that he was proud of the way that the *Cracker* team "hadn't taken for granted the programme's success." The new set of features promises to be just as dramatic, controversial, and powerful as those that came before.

Jeremy Brett (pictured with mirror-mad director Peter Hammond and costar Claudine Auger) was in obvious poor health during the filming of *THE THREE GABLES*.



PRIME SUSPECT is yet another thoroughbred from the Granada stables. A new series has just been before the cameras. After **PRIME SUSPECTS 1, 2, and 3**, the new set brings a distinct change to the usual format. There will be three complete two-hour films, each by a different writer and with its own separate storyline, but linked by a strong serial narrative tracing the conflicts in the turbulent career of Detective Superintendent Jane Tennison (Helen Mirren) and her blossoming relationship with psychologist Patrick Schofield (Stuart Wilson). Now working for the area Major Investigation Team, the newly promoted Tennison is assigned to different stations to head major inquiries. After some tough personal decisions—including one about her pregnancy—Tennison returns to old territory in London's Southampton Row station to find herself working against the clock to trace "The Lost Child," the first film in the trilogy.

With **CRACKER** and **PRIME SUSPECT** we have a grittier, more dangerous type of show, miles away from the Sherlock Holmes series, which presents a smoother kind of evil, with a more enigmatic central figure. The Holmes shows don't give the younger audiences that immediate sense of thrill gratification. It's the difference between a cold beer and a fine wine—and I reckon Granada believes that beer sells better at the moment.

Holmes Away From Home

John Neville happily submits to a *Scarlet Street* interview!

John Neville's heart belongs to the stage. Even when he was starring as Sherlock Holmes in *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1966), he was managing and acting in a theater in Nottingham. When he accepted the lead in Terry Gilliam's *THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHAUSEN* (1989), it was only because the theater he was running—this time in Stratford, Ontario—was closed for the off season.

Neville has not made very many motion pictures, but a surprising number of them are of interest to genre fans. In addition to *A STUDY IN TERROR* and *MUNCHAUSEN*, he starred in the cult sci-fi fave *UNEARTHLY STRANGER*.

Taking time out from his busy theater schedule, John Neville was happy (really, he was) to answer a few questions about that memorable motion picture in which the world's greatest detective fought the world's most famous serial killer!



Interview by Jessie Lilley



LEFT: Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson (John Neville and Donald Houston) enjoy a quiet moment in Baker Street before tracking down Jack the Ripper. RIGHT: On Sherlock's instructions, Watson creates a disturbance at a Whitechapel hostel—little realizing that his comrade is close at hand.

Scarlet Street: How did you come to be cast as Sherlock Holmes in A STUDY IN TERROR?

John Neville: My goodness, I have no idea. It's a long time ago that I've made that movie. It was a very good movie, actually. It was in wonderful color, and it had an incredible cast, some very good British stage actors from theaters like the Old Vic, the National Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre—wonderful cast. And it had, in Donald Houston, I thought, the best Dr. Watson ever.

SS: He was delightful.

JN: I guess I was just asked to play it. I'm good casting for that role. I would think.

SS: Did you have any fear of becoming too closely identified with the character, as did Basil Rathbone?

JN: No, not really, because I had a very busy career in the theater. All my life, I was mainly in theater. As I was so busy, I hadn't made that many movies, really, so there wasn't much danger of me being typecast. I did, much later, play Holmes on stage in New York.

SS: When you replaced John Wood on Broadway in the William Gillette play, SHERLOCK HOLMES. What prompted you to take on the role again?

JN: Well, I was the acting director of a theater in Edmonton, Alberta, at the time, and that theater group doesn't operate in the summer. It's one of those regional groups that has a fall, a winter, and a spring season. Well, I had a long summer break, and I was offered the role. I turned it down quite enough times, because I wanted a summer break, really. But it proved to be a lucrative engagement, so I'm glad I did it. It

was just a super production, a very fine production, from the Royal Shakespeare director Frank Dunlop—an old friend of mine. It was a very enjoyable experience. It was really a very fine production, played in a kind of old-fashioned, melodramatic style, which had a lot of humor in it.

SS: Aside from the technical differences between stage and film acting, was your stage Holmes different from your film Holmes?

JN: I think it was, really. Because of the nature of the production—it being a kind of heightened, melodramatic, stylized production, with a lot of humor. I also met another old friend in that production, Clive Revill, who played Moriarty. We had played in the West End of London in a show called IRMA LA DOUCE. SHERLOCK HOLMES was a very enjoyable production. I did it, I think, for 16 weeks, and then went back to my theater in Alberta.

SS: The play has Holmes fall in love. Was that a difficult emotion to incorporate into the characterization?

JN: No, because it's so well written. That particular play has stood the test of time, because it's a vehicle that the great American actor/manager William Gillette played practically all his life. The play works remarkably well. It's a very good vehicle, a very well-made play, and it was made to work.

SS: Were you familiar with the Sherlock Holmes stories, or in any way a fan before you took the role?

JN: No, not really. I was familiar with them, yes.

SS: What did you do to research the character of Holmes?

JN: Oh, I don't believe in that very much. I don't believe that you have to research, not to a great extent. If you're doing a play, what's in the text is what guides you about how you play the character. I mean, you can read background . . .

SS: Have you any desire to play Holmes again?

JN: Well, if it's a good script, yes. I would certainly consider it.

SS: Herman Cohen, who was executive producer on A STUDY IN TERROR, is noted mainly for his horror films, such as HORRORS THE BLACK MUSEUM and I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF. What was he like?

JN: Well, he was very agreeable. I didn't see that much of him, but he was very agreeable to work with.

SS: He told us that he had directed parts of A STUDY IN TERROR.

JN: I don't recall that. I recall it being directed by Mr. James Hill.

SS: The Conan Doyle estate were involved as producers of A STUDY IN TERROR. Were they very strict in regard to Conan Doyle's characters?

JN: No, I don't think so. Frankly, they were very friendly. They took me on a trip to the museum. It has all kinds of Holmes memorabilia, you know. And it's in a castle!

SS: Robert Morley appears as Mycroft Holmes. In 1960, you played Lord Alfred Douglas opposite Morley as Oscar Wilde. Did this connection lead to A STUDY IN TERROR?

JN: No. They cast him without that connection. We had always been very good friends.

SS: What was it like to work with Robert Morley?

JN: Wonderful! Absolutely wonderful! He was a dear friend, a very



LEFT and RIGHT: John Neville and Robert Morley played the Holmes brothers in *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1966), but in *OSCAR WILDE* (1960) they played Lord Alfred Douglas and the Wilde man himself.

lovely man. He also directed me in a stage play, in London, called *ONCE MORE WITH FEELING*. Robert Morley was just simply a gorgeous man. I remember one occasion, when he was directing me—we were rehearsing on the stage of a theater in which we were not going to play, actually. He came up to me one morning at the beginning of rehearsal, with a huge pair of binoculars around his neck, and I said, "Rob, what's the matter? Can't you see?" And he said, "No, no, no, my dear boy, I'm going to the races today. I think you'll get on a lot better without me." (Laughs) And he did! He said, "We will open this play in Brighton before going to the West End." I said, "Why are we opening it in Brighton?" He said,

"Well, my dear boy, we can go to derby!" So he took me to the derby.

SS: He was a fan of the horses. . .

JN: Yes! Oh, yes! (Laughs) He was without question!

SS: The film *OSCAR WILDE*, of course, dealt with "the love that dare not speak its name." Homosexuality was, for many years, a taboo subject on the movie screen. In the early '60s, however, two Oscar Wilde films were made back to back.

JN: I don't know what brought about the change, but it was very good for me. It was odd; it was crazy that two movies on Oscar Wilde were made at the same time. I guess that sometimes happens. It happened with Christopher Columbus. But it was such a wasted effort, really, and a waste of huge sums of money.

SS: You said that you don't research your characters. Does that hold true when you play an actual person, such as Lord Alfred Douglas?

JN: Well, there's been a lot written about him, and there's a lot that he wrote himself. He was a poet—quite a good poet, actually. You'd want to read about that, and want to read the whole incident culminating in the trial at the Old Bailey, so that one can gauge the kind of influence he had on Oscar Wilde—a very bad one.

SS: What's your opinion of *A STUDY IN TERROR*?

JN: Well, it was very good. I remember that the color was so wonderful. And the atmosphere. What I think helped enormously was the cast; it was like a National Theatre cast, or a Royal Shakespeare cast. It

LEFT: In 1964, John Neville appeared opposite Gabriella Licudi in the sci-fi thriller *UNEARTHLY STRANGER*. **RIGHT:** Though he hadn't appeared in movies for many years, Neville was offered the lead in *THE ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHHAUSEN* (1989)—and readily accepted.





"No, you monstrous fiend! That's my copy of *Scarlet Street*!" Sherlock Holmes (John Neville) meets Jack the Ripper (John Fraser) in the classic *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1966).

was filled with such wonderful actors: Frank Finlay, Donald Houston, John Fraser . . .

SS: You've spoken very warmly about Donald Houston, who played Watson.

JN: He died fairly recently, in Portugal. I don't know how or why, but he wasn't that old. He was a good friend at the time, and I can only repeat that he was the best Dr. Watson, ever. He wasn't a buffoon, and he wasn't a joke.

SS: Frank Finlay portrayed Inspector Lestrade.

JN: Marvelous, simply marvelous actor. He was a long time at the National Theatre. I don't know what he's up to now. I'm no longer very closely in touch with Britain, because I don't live there, anymore.

SS: Did you get to know John Fraser and Adrienne Corri at all?

JN: I knew them both very well before the movie. John Fraser and I worked on many things.

SS: Were any further Holmes films or TV shows offered to you as a result of *A STUDY IN TERROR*?

JN: I've once been approached about doing a series, but that didn't get through, no.

SS: Was it British or American?

JN: American.

SS: You've played many classical roles on stage. Do you consider your appearances as Holmes and Baron Munchausen of lesser importance?

JN: No, I don't. In particular, thinking of Baron Munchausen, it was a very important role in what it required of a practical actor.

SS: Actors who work mainly on stage sometimes look down on film work.

JN: It's snobbish.

SS: What brought you back to the screen as the Baron?

JN: Well, Terry Gilliam had been trying to set this movie up for two or three years, I think. Everywhere he went to get this movie together, people said, "You know who wants to play that, don't you? The answer is John Neville." And he got sick of hearing my name. I was in my office—I was running this theater in Stratford, Ontario—and I got a call from Rome, and Terry said he would like to meet me; he was coming to Toronto. In the meantime, I was sent a script. I went to the meeting thinking "I'm not going to be offered this. This is a huge role, and I haven't done a movie in 20 years! And even if I am offered it, I will be too busy running this theater." So I went to see him, and we had a lovely time together; he's very funny. He pointed to the script on the coffee table and said, "What do you think about it?" I said, "Well, it's absolutely fascinating, wonderful, but I don't know how you would shoot it as a movie." He said, "Neither do I, but we're going to do it, anyway." Two days later, I got a phone call saying that I had the role. Then I had to do a lot of planning for the theater for the following season. I went away in the off season—to Rome for six months—and made *BARON MUNCHAUSEN*. And that's how it happened.

SS: It's quite an elaborate production. Was it difficult to shoot?

JN: Very difficult. Yes, "quite an elaborate production," I think, is

an understatement. It was very difficult, very hard work. And tough to do. Six months is very, very long—but, you know, looking at it, I think it was worth it. It wasn't always enjoyable, but most of it was.

SS: What was it like to work with Eric Idle and Robin Williams?

JN: Eric Idle was lovely to work with. I didn't actually work with Robin, really. I had to leave to go back to my theater in Canada, and I played the scenes without him present. I played to a cardboard cutout, actually. Then he arrived later and did the same thing. Probably with a cardboard cutout of me, I would imagine. (Laughs)

SS: Playing a scene opposite cardboard must be difficult

JN: I can't help but feel that things would have been better if we'd played it together, but I had to go. I'd stayed over my time, anyway. I was well over my time. I was happy to get back to a season where not only was I acting, but also directing, and running the place.

SS: You made a sci-fi movie called *UNEARTHLY STRANGER*

JN: Yes! That's still playing someplace. (Laughs)

SS: Did you enjoy making that film?

JN: Yes, I did. The director was wonderful. He's a wonderful director who hasn't done nearly enough. But he knew exactly what was going on with me, and he made what is now considered a cult classic. His name was John Krish.

SS: Do you have any stories about making *UNEARTHLY STRANGER*?

JN: I have a memory of running a lot over Westminster Bridge, and I remember thinking at the time of William Wordsworth, who wrote a wonderful poem on Westminster. I don't remember that much about it, because it was a very long time ago. I just remember that the results were very good.

SS: One last question: Is it true that, at the same time you were making *A STUDY IN TERROR*, you were managing a theater in Nottingham?

JN: That's right.

SS: How did you do both?

JN: By airplane! (Laughs) Airplane, from Nottingham to the studio, very early in the morning—then back in the afternoon, because I was also playing and running the theater. So it was a plane every day.

SS: Didn't you get tired?

JN: I did, indeed. But I was a lot younger; I had a lot of stamina. And Sherlock Holmes is well known to be indestructible!

PREVIOUS PAGE: THE GRACIE ALLEN MURDER CASE (1939). RIGHT: Advertising art from three Vance mysteries. BELOW: Roland Young and Basil Rathbone are hot on the trail of a suspicious character (played by George F. Marion) in THE BISHOP MURDER CASE (1930).



fitted" to be the murderer; the others are too impulsive, erratic, or cautious.

Having identified the killer, Vance still does not know how he did it, because after Spottswode had left her apartment the Canary was heard speaking to him through the closed door. Vance's train of thought is conveyed visually in another series of shots borrowed from the silent version. Sitting in the apartment, he picks up a copy of *Bankers Review* magazine from a nearby table. He leafs through it, then spreads two pages open, holding them up to peer at a circular imprint in the surface. He glances toward the victim's phonograph, then walks over to it. The actual explanation occurs in a sound scene, as Markham stands in the hallway and hears a female voice: Spottswode had recorded his imitation of the woman, hidden the disc in the magazine, killed her, set the record playing, and then, once outside, conversed with his own falsetto voice. The book offers the same solution, but the filmmakers added the magazine to help make Vance's thoughts visible. (One wonders how the silent version had handled the very sound-oriented explanation.)

Incidentally, the same year that *The "Canary" Murder Case* was published, Wright in an essay described the "phonograph alibi" as a device "no longer used except by the inept and uninformed author." At the

time, Wright was still keeping his identity as S. S. Van Dine a secret, so he may have used this self-criticism to discourage speculation that he was the pseudonymous novelist.

As in the book, Vance admires the killer, who "played the game, shrewdly and boldly," and risked his life for his son. The scriptwriters, however, did not allow Vance to condone suicide. Instead, they abruptly have Spottswode (and his chauffeur) killed when a train collides with his auto.

Writers of puzzle-type mysteries tend to agonize about fairness. In 1928, Van Dine declared that readers "must have equal opportunity with the detective for solving the mystery. All clues must be plainly stated and described." In actual fact, this concept of fairness, if followed faithfully, would be unfair to the writer (or filmmaker) because the mere act of mentioning (or showing) something draws an unnatural degree of attention to it, immediately alerting the reader (or viewer) to its importance.

In the novels, the use of Van Dine as a narrator places readers one step away from the detective, so we are not privy to Vance's thoughts until he states them. We know what Van Dine sees, but he doesn't necessarily know what Vance sees. For example, in *'Canary'* we are unaware that Vance found tweezers and twine in a character's pocket until he uses them to demonstrate how to lock a door from the outside. (The film omitted this part of the puzzle.) Rather than





LEFT: Evidence in *THE BENSON MURDER CASE* (1930) brings a look of surprise to E. H. Calvert. RIGHT: Philo Vance (Basil Rathbone) makes a grim discovery in *THE BISHOP MURDER CASE* (1930).

Vance's limited deductions either prevent the police from making wrong assumptions or play into the criminal's hands by leading to false conclusions, or both. The first victim, nicknamed Cock Robin, is found with an arrow through his heart; noticing the body's unnatural position and the lack of a pool of blood, Vance concludes that Robin was killed elsewhere. Later, when Heath (James Donlan) assumes that his now-dead suspect committed suicide, Vance demonstrates that the body's slumping onto the desk would have knocked over the house of cards; hence, the house must have been built after the man's death, by his murderer.

While resisting the lure of the "obvious" clues, Vance considers the plotter's "type of mind." He decides that events reveal "the grim humor of an intellect that says cynically, 'Behold, this is the world you take so seriously. Life is a child's game, hardly important enough to make a joke about it.'" He knows this much, but can't select a culprit until the very end.

For such a plot to succeed, the characters and their interactions must be interesting in themselves, no mat-



ter what the resolution of the mystery. In fact, three characters become more memorable than Vance himself. Sigurd Arnesson reveals a cynicism that surpasses even the detective's. "Life is cruel," he says to Belle, whom he loves, "but what can we crawling microbes do about it?" The casting of Roland Young in the part tempers the character's cold-bloodedness, his dry tones making Arnesson charmingly wry. When he first enters, he asks, "Why is this house littered with policemen—who at best are hardly ornamental?" Arnesson's arch choice of words and Young's distinctive delivery spark the viewer's interest, and the embers continue glowing throughout the film.

If Young turns an exaggerated character into a fairly believable one, two other performances do just the opposite. Wright states of Adolph Drukker, a crippled scientist, that "there was intellectuality in the man's face," but occasionally "a crafty, repulsive smile contorted his mouth." George F. Marion is a perverse choice to play Drukker, for this horse-faced actor hardly conveys intellectuality. Marion twists his already caricatured vis-

LEFT: Heath and Vance (Eugene Palette and Warren William) are menaced by a giant ostrich in *THE DRAGON MURDER CASE* (1934). RIGHT: Only one of these two people is actually thinking.



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LEFT: Philo Vance (Basil Rathbone) takes aim in *THE BISHOP MURDER CASE* (1930). RIGHT: Behind the scenes on *THE BISHOP MURDER CASE*. NEXT PAGE: Edmund Lowe as Philo Vance.

age into a perpetual grimace, adds a surly glare, and speaks as if each word required a major effort. Similarly, Charles Quartermaine turns the "quiet courtesy" of the book's John Pardee, a chess expert, into unctuousness. With a wary, startled look in his wide eyes, he bends his lean body forward at the waist and rubs his palms together, giving an impression of constant deviousness.

Drukker and Pardee don't just act suspicious—they seem maniacal, and are far more oddly acted than they are written. They certainly disrupt the otherwise realistic tone set by the other performers (even those who fail, as future director Delmer Daves does with his frozen sneer as a minor suspect). They hark back to the weird eccentrics inhabiting such mystery plays and films as *THE CAT AND THE CANARY* (1927). However, they are fascinating to watch in their delightful, deliberate excessiveness.

Except in this one area, *BISHOP* faithfully evokes Wright's work. It even includes the morbidly curious onlookers gathered outside the scene of the murder. Granted, a compromise had to be made at the end. The novel's Vance realizes that Professor Dillard (Alec B. Francis), in a final attempt to implicate Arnesson, has put poison in Arnesson's wine glass, intending his death to look like suicide. Vance lets the guilty man drink his own poison because he "felt no more compunction in aiding a monster like Dillard into the Beyond than I would have in crushing out a poisonous reptile in the act of striking." Hollywood couldn't let Vance be quite that lawless, so in the film he hides the poisoned glass, but tells Dillard that he has it. When his guilt is exposed, Dillard gulps the liquid; tension and the power of suggestion do their job, and Dillard dies of a heart attack. The final effect is close enough to a callous execution to count

Of the first four Vance books, the last to be filmed was the first published. Like the previous three films, *THE BENSON MURDER CASE* is faithful to Vance's spirit,

but it completely changes the plot and characters, retaining only a few names and a couple of story details. Why would Paramount so thoroughly alter its popular property?

As Wright's first detective novel, *Benson* contained a relatively simple crime and devoted considerable space to introducing Vance and his methods. The first three films had much fancier plots, so scriptwriter Bartlett Cormack devised a more complex and ingenious (and unlikely) murder for this one. Also, the stock market crash had occurred in October 1929; because the victim in *Benson* is a Wall Street broker (played by Richard Tucker), it would seem odd to include such a character and ignore the recent real-life events. So, Cormack used the crash and Benson's selling of his clients' holdings as a possible motive for killing him. To this he added, echoing the novel, some sexual conflict.

One of Anthony Benson's clients is Harry Gray (William Boyd), identified vaguely as some sort of gangster and therefore an authority on professional killers. His point of view adds interest during an early conversation with Markham and Vance. Vance (William Powell) asserts that "the only infallible method of determining human guilt is by analyzing the psychological factors of the crime and then applying them to the individual." Gray counters that the killers Vance has met "always used a lot of trick stuff, a lot of props. The professionals don't... They 'bang 'em neat and leave 'em where they lay.'"

"You mean to tell me that you'd ignore all tangible evidence of the crime?" asks Markham, who ought to know the answer. "Not ignore it, no, but neither would I accept it for gospel on its face value," explains Vance, who also reveals little confidence in trials, saying, "Juries have to depend on circumstantial evidence, Markham. They can't understand any other kind." Later, alone with Markham, Vance dismisses the usefulness of motive. "Drop a nickel in a slot and get a motive. Everybody has some motive for murdering some-

body." These statements accurately convey Vance's position, though a bit less forcefully than in the books.

Gray provides a good excuse for Vance to verbalize his beliefs, but the conversation is more relevant to the plot than it seems. Gray turns out to be Benson's killer and he sets himself up as an unlikely suspect in two ways. First, he is downstairs talking to Vance when a shot is heard and the body tumbles down a staircase, so how could he have done it? Also, if Vance were to figure out the murder method—Benson was shot with a silencer earlier and a delayed action gimmick controlled the second shot and the fall of the body—Gray had already established himself as the kind who would have used a more direct means. "This was no professional job," Gray stresses afterward. In fact, it was a job done by a professional in an amateur's style, to direct suspicion away from himself. (Cormack may have modeled this part of the plot on *CANARY*, in which the killer also appeared to be elsewhere when the murder occurred.)

In keeping with the novel's format, Vance's initial deductions prevent the police from suspecting the wrong person. When Heath believes that Fanny Del Roy (Natalie Moorhead) shot Benson when he forced his attentions on her, Vance points out that the victim's toupee was neatly put away, so he wouldn't have invited a woman to his room. Vance also indicates the puddle of blood on the second step from the top, but doesn't reveal its significance. Later, he mentions finding some stringy fuzz on Benson's waistcoat and, when a policeman brings him some cord used in Benson's wine cellar, Vance cuts off a piece and sets fire to it. None of this is explained at the time, but we know it must mean something.

Otherwise, the film concentrates on the characters, who are tainted and even unpleasant, but not unsympathetic for all that. They include a chubby, desperate widow (May Beatty) and her nervous, fawning, and unfaithful gigolo (Paul Lukas, who would inherit the role of Vance several years later). Then there is Miss Del Roy. When Markham makes a snide reference to her "reputation," she snaps back with aggressive defensiveness: "I've liked men in my time. They've liked me. What of it?" Vance admires her spunk, despite her questionable virtue, and protects her by withholding information about the child she is secretly raising in Boston.

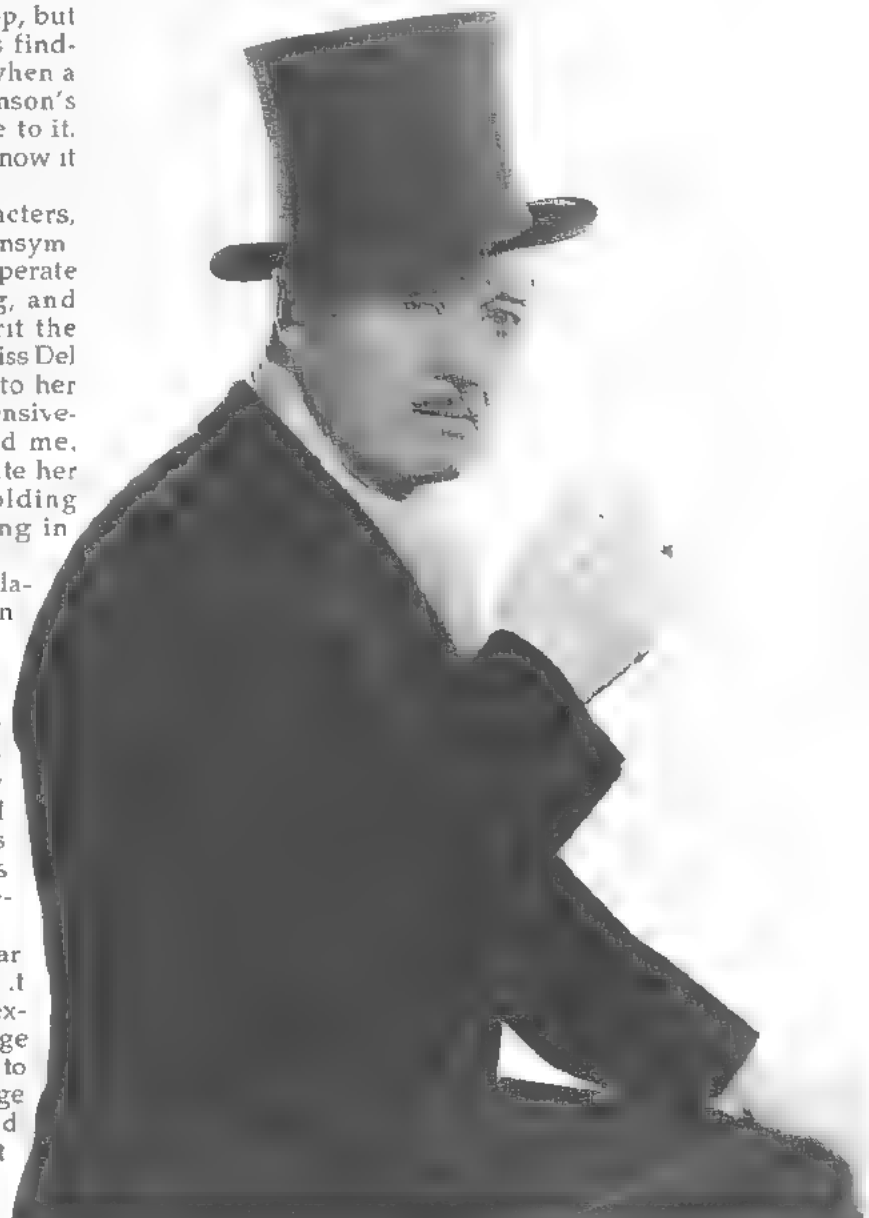
The film's major weakness lies in the final explanation scene. Far too much information has been kept from everyone but Vance, so instead of being impressive, his revelations inspire resentment. We knew Vance had asked the widow for a hairpin, but we didn't know he had found a similar pin on her pillow or that he had seen the impression her figure left on the bed, letting him know that she had been resting during the murder and that her confession was false. When Vance produces some missing pearls and a silencer from his pocket, he states for the first time that a policewoman had found them in Gray's hotel room.

We knew that Benson had a unique burglar alarm in his wine cellar, but we couldn't know that it involved cartridges that drop to the floor and explode. Gray had tied Benson's body and a cartridge to the railing at the top of the steps and set fire to the cord; when it burned through, the cartridge fell, so a shot was heard, and the body dropped down the stairs. Gray ascended the steps first

and picked up the remains of the cord (but a bit of its fuzz was left on Benson's waistcoat).

Cinematically, the film offers an exceptional first few minutes that depict the stock market crash in a dynamic series of shots. Stock boards and tickers are intercut with faces seen from dramatic angles. Then, price quotations melt and spin, blending with closeups of eyes and of men wiping sweat from their faces or clutching their foreheads. This variation on the Soviet style of editing conveys the situation powerfully and wordlessly. The rest of the film, however, is thoroughly staid, with many long shots and few closeups of objects or expressions. *BENSON* is, at least, the first Vance film to avoid the awkward technique from which the earliest talkies suffered.

When Philo Vance returned to the screen in 1933, the novels were not the popular rage they had been, so Hollywood felt less need to be faithful. Still, the four Vance films released between 1933 and 1936 tried to be true to the genre while satisfying the public's desire for "entertainment," something that offered relaxation, not a challenge. Under the circumstances, it is a pleasant surprise that two of these films are rewarding works, though in strikingly different ways.



THE KENNEL MURDER CASE begins with new scenes that introduce the characters and establish their antagonisms. It does this so thoroughly that what we learn about these people at the start is almost all we ever learn. In Vance's investigation, psychology receives only token nods: Informed that Archer Coe (Robert Barrat) has supposedly killed himself, Vance (William Powell) asserts that "suicide is almost a psychological impossibility for him," and near the end, while arranging to expose the guilty party, he says, "If we can catch him off his guard, he'll give himself away." In KENNEL, Vance concentrates on identifying and interpreting evidence, but if the case is therefore less a Philo Vance mystery than a generic one, the studio did create probably the best cinematic example of a pure puzzle detective story. Admittedly, it has little serious competition, but that does not diminish the achievement.

The murder situation devised by Wright, and retained in the script, is so complex that Vance needs the whole film to uncover it. Raymond Wrede (Ralph Morgan)—Archer Coe's secretary and the frustrated suitor of Coe's niece, Hilda Lake (Mary Astor)—knocked Coe out with a fireplace poker, then stabbed him with a Chinese dagger. Archer regains consciousness, not realizing he was stabbed, and dies as he undresses in his bedroom. Coincidentally, Brisbane Coe (Frank Conroy) planned to murder his brother that same night. He now enters and finds Archer seemingly asleep in his chair. He shoots him in the head, then sets the scene to look like suicide by throwing the door's interior bolt from outside. But Wrede had seen Archer at the bedroom window and returns to finish the job. In the dark he mistakes Brisbane for his brother, stabs him with the same dagger, and hides the body in a closet.

Most of the changes made by screenwriter Robert Presnell expand on the novel rather than, as usually happens, simplifying it. Without disrupting the story, they lengthen the list of suspects by including Doris Delafield (Helen Vinson), who is only mentioned in the book; by creating Sir Thomas MacDonald (Paul Cavanagh), who is given some of Eduardo Grassi's functions; and by providing Coe's butler, Gamble (Arthur Hohl), with a hidden, criminal past.

Although Wright's plot had Vance identify the killer before deciding how he did the deed, the film avoids an anticlimax by reversing that order, moving the confrontation with Wrede to the end. In the book, Wrede had earlier abused and given away the dog that later attacks and kills him, but that is not the animal that interrupts the murderer and that Wrede strikes with the fireplace poker; the script usefully combines these two into one dog, now owned by Miss Delafield and never by Wrede. Not surprisingly, the writers eliminate the fact that Vance allows the dog to kill Wrede; in the film, he lets the dog attack, but Wrede is not killed.

Overall, the screenwriter deftly juggles the many plot details, but two items get away from him. The book's Wrede lived in the building next door and had seen Archer Coe through the window from there; the film has him living in Coe's house, but still states that the killer had seen Coe from an apartment opposite—without explaining how Wrede happened to be in that building. Also added was an early scene in which Sir Thomas MacDonald's Scottie is killed. Sir Thomas suspects Coe, which gives him a motive for the murder, but the script never reveals how the dog died.

KENNEL makes a good case against "fairness" in the planting of clues. Vance deduces that Coe had died while getting undressed because one of the victim's shoes is half off, but the film does not show this detail until Vance points it out. Later, Brisbane's cane resting on a chair reveals that he had returned to the house,

but we are unaware of its presence until Vance mentions it. Both times, what we lose in fairness we gain in the drama of the revelation.

We do see the string and bent pins when Vance finds them in Brisbane's pocket, and so do Heath and Markham. We and Vance have also just read a sentence that mentions such objects in the book *Unsolved Murders*, found in Brisbane's luggage. So we—and, presumably, Vance—assume that Brisbane used these items to lock Archer's door from outside. The filmmakers let us in on this "clue" because the precise way it was used remains to be revealed. Once again, KEN-

NEL strikes the needed balance between information and surprise. It is, however, a little less than fair that we never learn how Vance decides that Wrede is guilty.

The Warners creative team must have realized that this talky investigation of past events offered viewers little in the way of action or character revelation to keep them alert. The story was sped up by eliminating many transitions between scenes; then director Michael Curtiz increased the energy level with a very active visual style.

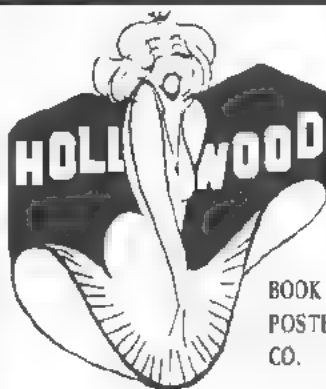
On many occasions, the film plunges rapidly forward, forcing the viewer to keep up with it. Vance begins a line of dialogue in one place ("We've got to get there before . . ."), and after a brief, blurred camera movement, he finishes it (" . . . 4:45") in a new location. After Vance demands the name of the lady next door, we hear Gamble reply "Doris Delafield" during a blurred camera movement, which stops in a different apartment, on a woman who says, "Yes, I'm Doris Delafield."

Curtiz depicts the retrieval of Brisbane's overnight bag from storage at a railroad station with tremendous efficiency. After Gamble describes the bag, a blurred pan leads to a closeup of it being removed from a cubicle; in a long shot, a policeman takes possession of it; a closeup follows the bag as it's carried, then dis-



E. H. Calvert, William Powell, and Eugene Pallette in THE CANARY MURDER CASE (1929).

Continued on page 102



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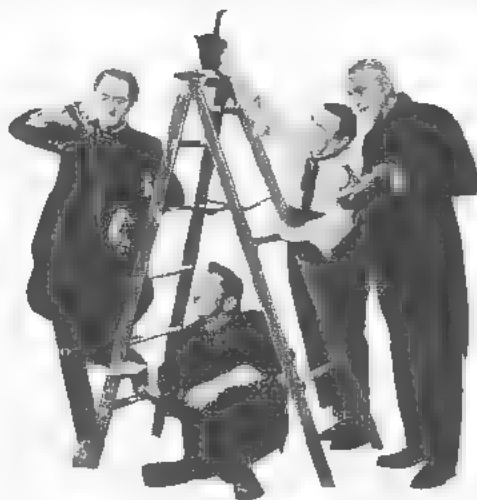
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Book Ends

The Scarlet Street Review of Books

FATHER OF FRANKENSTEIN

Christopher Bram

Dutow, 1995

276 Pages—\$19.95

James Whale lives again in *Father of Frankenstein*, Christopher Bram's fictional meditation on the legendary director's last days.

Bram sets his tale during the final two weeks of the director's life. It's spring of 1957, and 67-year-old James Whale is recovering from a stroke. One of the stroke's after-effects is recurring memories, sights, and smells from the director's past. Sitting in his Santa Monica Canyon home, Whale is besieged by memories of his early days in a mining town, his horrifying experiences in the Great War, and Hollywood in the 1930s.

Enter Clayton Boone, beach bum and gardener, upset at the course events in his life have taken. Boone feels as if life has passed him by, and realizes that a life without "war stories," without extreme or dramatic events, is a life un-lived.

Whale has spent his retirement painting, and when he asks Boone to pose for a picture, the gardener gets satisfaction from sitting for the great man. Here, at least, is reflected glory: He is pals with the guy who directed FRANKENSTEIN.

As Whale struggles to draw, he compulsively relates incidents from

his past. Boone listens, fascinated. Ready at first to dismiss Whale as "an old fairy" ("He knows homosexuals only by their reputation, the same way he knows Communists and flying saucers"), he soon regards his employer with "tenderness and sorrowful awe."

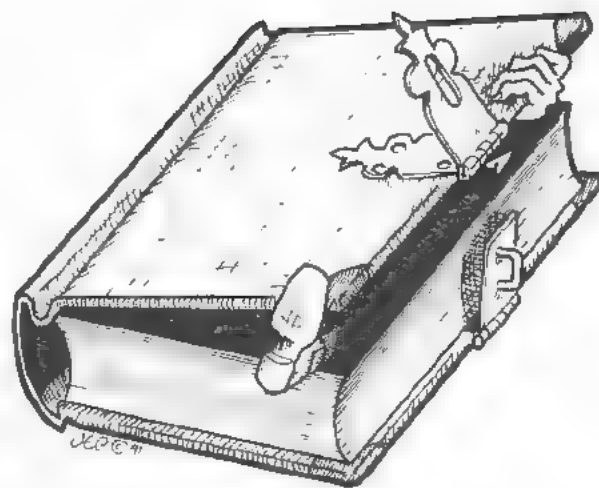
Whale, however, has plans of his own. Imprisoned by an ailing body, his mind permanently fogged by the stroke, he plots to persuade Boone to murder him.

All of this leads to the fateful morning when Whale's body is found fully clothed, drowned in his swimming pool.

Father of Frankenstein works as well as it does mostly on the power of its premise. Bram's prose has the peculiar effect of distancing the reader; one feels as if the story was related rather than experienced. But Whale and Boone are such potent characters that the book is ultimately successful. It sits well with the reader, and one may savor it more upon later reflection.

This is not a fictionalized biography. The opening page carries the disclaimer: "This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either the products of the author's imagination or, if real, are used fictitiously." Of the story's major characters, only Whale actually existed. Boone, Maria the housekeeper, and most others, are pure invention.

Bram, however, peppers the narrative with celebrity appearances sure to please Scarlet Streeters. Greta Garbo, George Cukor, Elizabeth Taylor, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, Colin Clive, Ernest Thesiger, and producer David Lewis, Whale's lover of 20



years, all make appearances. Boris Karloff appears as well, a dour, sour man completely unlike the historical Karloff. (It's with Karloff, perhaps, that Bram's speculative characterization goes most awry, but he is so minor a character in the tale that it matters little.)

If you're interested in the telling details on the making of Whale's classic horror films, this is not the book for you. Those, however, wanting an interesting and satisfying reinvention of one of the most fascinating figures of the Golden Age read *Father of Frankenstein*. It is a novel that merits a second reading.

—Bob Madison

GEORGE CUKOR, MASTER OF ELEGANCE

Emanuel Levy

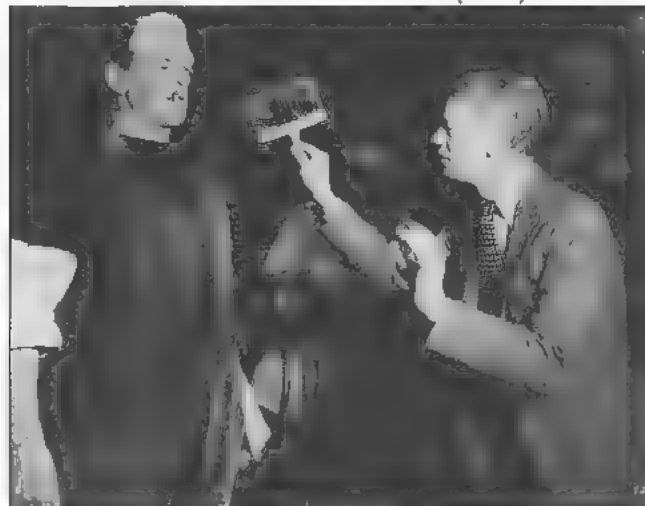
William Morrow & Co., 1994

464 Pages—\$25

George Cukor was the director responsible for such cinema masterpieces as *DINNER AT EIGHT* (1933), *LITTLE WOMEN* (1933), *GASLIGHT* (1944), *ADAM'S RIB* (1949), and *MY FAIR LADY* (1964). He was renowned as a "woman's director" who got notable performances from Joan Crawford, Katharine Hepburn, Jean Harlow, and Judy Holliday. Now Emanuel Levy explores the life of this complex, and often overlooked, filmmaker.

Cukor's film career started with Hollywood's Golden Age of the 1930s, and concluded in 1981, with *RICH AND FAMOUS*. He was the intimate of many film and literary legends, including John and Ethel Barrymore, Carson Kanin and Ruth Gordon, Somerset Maugham, and Tennessee Williams. Stories of Cukor's direction of John Barry-

James Whale hams it up with Boris Karloff on the set of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935).



more in *DINNER AT EIGHT* and *ROMEO AND JULIET* (1936), and his handling of Garbo in *CAMILLE* (1937), have passed into legend.

Perhaps just as interesting is Cukor's work on two 1939 films he was ultimately dismissed from: *GONE WITH THE WIND* and *THE WIZARD OF OZ*. Cukor's coaching of Vivien Leigh and Olivia de Havilland continued long after Victor Fleming took over the directorial reins, and he actually worked with de Havilland on weekends after shooting with Fleming had begun. Leigh always thought that her work with Cukor on the film was better than what she had done with Fleming, even once admonishing the replacement director to watch the original Cukor rushes.

Unfortunately, Levy's book is a disservice to this fascinating and ultimately lonely man. Levy's research is comprehensive, and he inundates the reader with all of it. The most inconsequential of celebrity quotes are preserved in their entirety, whether the ground has been covered or not.

Nor are we offered any insight into Cukor's personal, emotional life. An open homosexual in a time when homosexuality in Hollywood was accepted but not condoned, Cukor emerges a sad figure despite Levy's inability to comment on this aspect of his subject's life. Cukor was disdainful of his contemporaries James Whale and Arthur Lubin for being too "indiscreet." (Whale had lived with another man for over 20 years, and that made Cukor uncomfortable.) In fact, for his more than 80 years, there seems to have been no continuing romantic relationship in Cukor's life.

Instead, he harnessed his romantic energy into his work, his friendships, and into his pets. Cukor owned many dogs in his lifetime, and the final picture in the book's photo gallery is a signed photo of Cukor and his dog, Whitney. Sadly, he has inscribed the photo: "The Cukors, George and Whitney."

If any of his friends told Cukor that this was a tragic waste, Levy does not record it. Certainly Levy makes no comment, or offer any insight.

More unfortunate is Levy's reluctance to comment on what he records. Joan Fontaine says: "George was a better women's director because he was more feminine by nature. We all knew he was homosexual. He made no bones about it. He cared about detail, about clothes,



George Cukor's directing career took him from the quaint romanticism of *LITTLE WOMEN* (1933, with Douglass Montgomery and Katharine Hepburn) to the sex-for-pay realities of *RICH AND FAMOUS* (1981, with Matt Lattanzi and Jacqueline Bisset).

about ambiance. These are feminine traits." Howlers like this go unchallenged by Levy: No responsible author in 1995 should blithely assume that a homosexual artist was more "feminine." While Levy contends that Cukor's prowess as a "women's director" is an "erroneous misconception," he never takes the argument out of its 1930s sexist roots. Levy recounts the remarkable performances of Ronald Colman, Jimmy Stewart, James Mason, and Cary Grant under Cukor's directorial baton, but that's not quite the point.

The Cukor of this biography rings hollow, and never did this reader get any real sense of the man. Cukor is rendered uninteresting, surely not the intention of any biography. Levy's flat prose does not help matters, and while Cukor's tremendous energy is mentioned, it never enlivens this book.

—Bob Madison

MONSTERS AMONG US

Michael W. Pierce
Monsters Among Us Press, 1995
166 pages—\$19.95

Comic books have them; so do toys and trading cards. I'm speaking of price guides. The best friend of every collector, price guides tell us how much that old comic or trading card is worth, thus greatly reducing our chances of getting fleeced at the next sci-fi convention.

With *Monsters Among Us*, editor Michael W. Pierce finally presents a guide for monster mag and fanzine collectors. So if you've been wondering how much that old copy of *Famous Monsters* #38 is worth (the



one with *CURSE OF THE DEMON* on the cover), it's now a simple matter to find out. (You'll see that it goes for \$150 in Very Fine/Near Mint condition.)

Pierce and company have put together an excellent source of information. The book is wisely divided into three sections: Proazines, Fanzines, and Foreign, with an index at the front for easy access. The magazines in each section are listed in alphabetical order, and no 'zine is too small or obscure to be included. Expect to see such one shot wonders as *Forbidden Zone* and *Celluloid Nightmare* presented in all their glory here. (One quibble: Expect also to see an underpriced first issue of *Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror*.)

Each magazine is priced in three categories: Good, Very Good/Fine, and Very Fine/Near Mint. Footnotes give such additional info as title changes, dates of first publication, and who publishes what. Every entry has its cover printed in black and white for instant identification by rabid collectors, so if you've always wondered what *Cinemonsters* looks like, here's your chance.

Added features include an introduction by the always witty Forrest J. Ackerman, and an informative article by Steve Dolnick on grading monster magazines.

Monsters Among Us is a "must have" book for collectors of monster mags. I hope Michael W. Pierce publishes many more volumes in the years to come—and you'd better pick up this first edition before it becomes a collectors item itself!

—Sean Farrell

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CREATURE FEATURES MOVIE GUIDE STRIKES BACK

John Stanley

Creatures at Large Press, 1994

454 pages—\$20

TERROR ON TAPE

James O'Neill

Billboard Books, 1994

390 pages—\$16.95

One of the highlights of *Castle of Frankenstein*, Calvin Beck's irregularly published but essential monster mag of the '60s, was Joe Dante's movie guide feature. Joe, who was only a horror-struck kid from New Jersey at the time, had a game plan that was irresistibly ambitious: alphabetical capsule-critiques of every genre film ever released, tackling a new letter with each installment. As I recollect, Dante was slightly more than halfway through his goal when CoF closed its doors forever. (His writing career in shambles, poor Joe found himself having to settle for Hollywood fame and fortune as one of the genre's top directors.)

The A-to-Z horror movie guide has since become a ubiquitous item at the book shops, where new tomes compete with updates of old standbys. Among the newcomers are James O'Neill's *Terror on Tape*, which concentrates on the approximately 2,000 horror titles released on video.

John Stanley's *Creature Feature Movie Guide Strikes Back*, now in its fourth edition, continues to survey the complete run of horror, fantasy, and sci-fi thrillers.

Writing in a chirpy, likable style, Stanley offers more bang for the proverbial buck, opining on a mind-boggling 5,000-plus titles. But numbers, unfortunately, don't tell the whole story. Though Stanley's book tries mighty hard to be definitive, it falls short of being indispensable. The term "Creature Features" conjures memories of old black-and-white monster flicks, yet these are the very movies given less than a fair shake. Instead, Stanley seems

more at home with the celluloid terrors of the video generation, and while this in itself doesn't render the writer's opinions any less valid, his lack of detail in reviewing older pictures is baffling.

Something is curiously askew when Stanley can only cobble together a few terse sentences for Lon Chaney's landmark *THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* (1925), while there's no shutting him up when it comes to *TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES III* (1991). Even such seminal oldies as the Val Lewton films are disposed of politely and perfunctorily, as if the writer was more interested in pressing on with the likes of *WEIRD SCIENCE* (1985). The *Creature Features Movie Guide* doesn't cut corners when it comes to thoroughness, providing its readers with real assurance that they'll find a listing for any title they're seeking. Now if only its author's sense of proportion failed him less frequently.

James O'Neill, on the other hand, seems equally in tune with both the finer points of current splatter and the creakiest of silents. As such, his *Terror on Tape* more frequently hits the mark. Moreover, he has a closer affinity with B films, an absolute prerequisite in any discussion of a genre that rarely strayed from the low-budget arena before the 1973 release of *THE EXORCIST*.

Ostensibly a "horror-only" work, the not too literal-minded author has a broad enough interpretation of the term to include a good representation of sci-fi (including 1954's *THEM* and the Godzilla series), as well as the more macabre forays of Charlie Chan and Sherlock Holmes.

O'Neill is not only knowledgeable, he has a happy inclination to underscore the entertainment value in even the most artistically marginal of movies. (When was the last time you saw a three-star rating tagged to Ed Wood's infamous 1958 epic *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE*, or to a such a nickel-and-dime Bela Lugosi potboiler as 1941's *THE DEVIL BAT*?) It's particularly gratifying when O'Neill finds merit in often dismissed programmers, noting, for instance, the moody atmospherics of *RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958) or singling out Yvette Vickers' terrific turn as the swamp slut in *ATTACK OF THE GIANT LEECHES* (1959).

The concise career sidebars of notable horror actors, directors, and technicians provide a nice supplement, but are in dire need of in-

dexing. A better still selection would have been welcome, too—but, on the whole, *Terror on Tape* holds its own in the movie guide sweepstakes.

—Michael Brunas

HOLLYWOOD LESBIANS

Boze Hadleigh

Barricade Books, 1994

265 pages—\$21.95

One might ask why, until the mid-'90s, no book was published about Hollywood lesbians, despite lesbians being a reportedly "chic" and "hot" topic in the media.

One might also wonder why the first book on this subject was written by a man. But no matter—no one else but Boze Hadleigh could have written this particular book.

Hollywood Lesbians is not an overview nor an encyclopedic treatise; rather, it is a collection of riveting, entertaining, and enlightening interviews with 10 accomplished women of Hollywood's silver screen. (Despite the catchy and descriptive title, the women were not entirely sapphic, in that most of them married men somewhere along the way.)

The interviewees include director Dorothy Arzner, who declined to be interviewed in person, and designing woman Edith Head, who amassed two husbands-for-show and eight Academy Awards along the way—a long way, covering six decades and over 10,000 movie credits! "Edith Head gives great wardrobe" went a famous bit of graffiti, but Hadleigh assures us that the lady—a closeted prude—would not have been amused.

The majority of these subjects were actresses. They are divided into two convenient categories: three comedienne and five primarily dramatic actresses. The former are a sheer delight, perhaps the book's high points. Marjorie Main, best known as Ma Kettle, informed Hadleigh that in the Kettle household, Ma was the man of the house!

Nancy Kulp got into acting to perform the classics. Instead, the tomboyish Kulp was forever typed as a "humorous" spinster. She became famous as Miss Jane Hathaway on TV's omnipresent *THE BEVERLY HILLBILLIES*. This interview is warm, sad, revealing, and tragic—Kulp died prematurely of cancer.

Patsy Kelly played loud-mouthed Irish maids through the 1930s, until the industry boycotted her and she went to work for and live with Tallulah Bankhead—her sometimes

lover. Of the 10, Kelly was the most open, asserting, "Yeah, I'm a dyke! So what? Big deal!"

The five tragediennes include character actress supreme Agnes Moorehead, a brittle grande dame who nevertheless has moments of humor and humanity.

Not so Barbara Stanwyck, the biggest star in the group, and the most guarded. Also the most angry, bitter, and humorless. Stanwyck's is the briefest interview, though it's an electrifying one.

One is amazed not only by the widely varied personalities of these women, but by the way that the media, then and now, covers up the fact that, yes, Virginia, there really are Hollywood Lesbians.

—George F. Lyndon

VINTAGE MONSTER MOVIES

Robert Marrero

Fantasma Books, 1993 .

160 pages—\$12.95

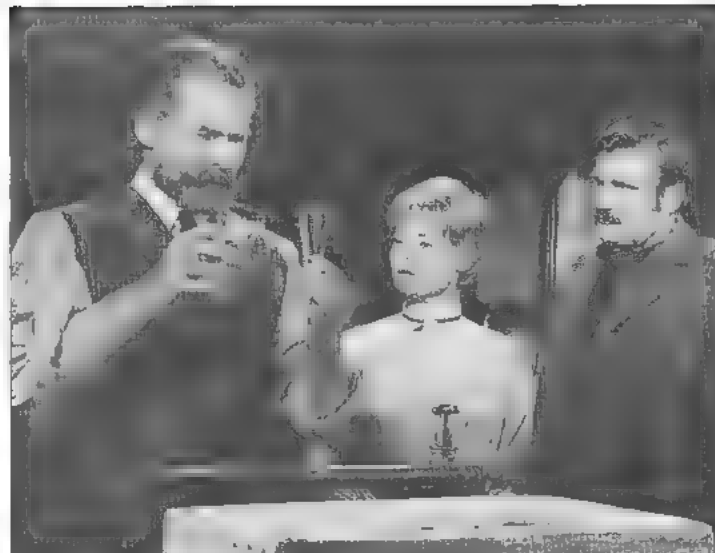
Vintage Monster Movies is a handsome soft cover volume by the author of the enjoyable *Giant Monster Movies*. As its title implies, *Vintage* takes an affectionate look at old horror films, beginning with the silent *FRANKENSTEIN* (1910) and ending with *CURSE OF THE DEMON* (1958).

Marrero gives an informative run-down of just about every major horror film produced within this 48-year period. Chapter One is devoted to the silents, Chapter Two covers horror in the 1930s (primarily the classic Universal films), Chapter Three looks at the 1940s, and—you guessed it—Chapter Four examines the fab fiends of the '50s.

Vintage Monster Movies is filled with wonderful photos, including some from even the most obscure films. Marrero helpfully includes a basic filmography listing each film's cast and crew, as well as the studio that released it. But while the production values and layout are well done, the text suffers from a number of glaring typos. Fantasma Books may want to invest in some good proofreaders.

That quibble aside, *Vintage Monster Movies* is recommended for the enthusiasm that author Marrero shows for these movies. The book may not offer anything new to the die-hard horror fan, but it is perfect reading for the casual viewer who may want to learn more about the classic horrors of a bygone era.

—Sean Farrell



LEFT: Georgia Brown made her movie debut in *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1966), but she was already known to theatergoers for her roles as Lucy in *THE THREEPENNY OPERA* and Nancy in *OLIVER!* RIGHT: Dame Judi Dench (sandwiched between Anthony Quayle and Donald Houston) had an early role in *A STUDY IN TERROR*.

A STUDY IN TERROR

Continued from page 72

A STUDY IN TERROR's second Baker Street scene is one of the finest in the Great Detective's film career, because it is one of the relatively few to show him making deductions in the style of the original stories. The scene is based on a similar one in Conan Doyle's "The Blue Carbuncle," but in this instance it is not a battered hat from which Holmes constructs a chain of circumstances, but a medical case.

The case, naturally enough, contains a set of surgical instruments. Still, it is not complete: The large scalpel (or post-mortem knife) has been removed.

A quick examination gives Holmes some vital information: The instruments belonged to a medical man who has fallen on hard times (as had Mr. Henry Baker, the hat owner in "The Blue Carbuncle"), they were pawned, the pawn shop faces south in a narrow street, business is bad, the pawnbroker is a foreigner, and the case was sent to Baker Street by a woman of limited education.

As if that isn't enough, Holmes finds under the red velvet lining a hidden coat of arms linking the case to the stately House of Osborne!

One of the most popular theories concerning Jack the Ripper is that he was either a member of royalty or so closely associated with the Crown that the police, after tracking him down, withheld his identity from the public. So prevailing was this hypothesis that in 1978, when Chris Steinbrunner and Norman Michaels wrote *The Films of Sherlock Holmes*, they went so far as to state that "An intelligent script by brothers Donald and Derek Ford presented a surprisingly accurate solution to the Ripper mystery, pointing, as does more recently uncovered evidence, to the involvement of a titled family."

It is certainly an intelligent script, but the "recently uncovered evidence," which was used as the basis for the second Holmes versus Ripper film, *MURDER BY DECREE*, has been pretty much discounted by now, and the Whitechapel murders, to this day, remain a mystery without a solution.

Holmes and Watson bring the case to the Duke of Shires (Barry Jones, performing in the first of his two scenes as if he were not a mere Duke, but Queen Victoria herself). The snobbish aristocrat identifies it as the property of his "dead" son, Michael Osborne. (Michael is dead because he chose to defy his father and enter a "trade"—that of physician.) Leaving, Holmes contrives to bump into the Duke's elder son, Edward, Lord Carfax (John Fraser), who deftly replaces the surgical instruments in the case dropped by the detective. (It is something of an historic meeting, since both Neville and Fraser played Lord Alfred Douglas in competing Oscar Wilde biopics in 1960. Later, when Robert Morley, who played Wilde opposite Neville, turns up as Mycroft Holmes, we have almost a full house—lacking only Peter Finch, who was Wilde over Fraser.)

The next stop for the Baker Street duo is a pawn shop in Whitechapel, where they encounter Joseph Beck (Charles Regnier), the foreign pawnbroker. (We have already seen Beck in the earlier scene at the Angel & Crown; in fact, the script sets him up as a suspect by having him leave the pub shortly before Polly Nichols is killed.)

Holmes learns that the surgical instruments were pledged by a woman named Angela Osborne, who gave as her address a Montague Street hostel run by Dr. Murray (Anthony Quayle). As luck has it, Murray is the local police surgeon and the hostel adjoins the mortuary, so Holmes and Watson press on to examine the body of Annie Chapman. They meet Lestrade, who grudgingly introduces them to Murray and the remains of the Ripper's latest victim. Also present is a character the script refers to as the Simpleton (John Cairney), a young man who seems to have an unhealthy interest in the corpse.

Another fact or two falls into place, and again they are derived from history: Two weapons were used on the victim, one "a long, bayonet type knife" and the other "a sharper, more meticulous instrument"—in all probability, a scalpel. (Because of the bayonet, it was believed that the killer might have a military background. *STUDY* acknowledges this by prominently featuring soldiers in the Angel & Crown scenes; Polly is tossed into the street after trying to rob one of them.)



LEFT: Barbara Windsor played the doomed Annie Chapman in *A STUDY IN TERROR* (1966), sharing one scene with boxer Terry Downes (in the role of Chunky). RIGHT: He had had three relatively brief scenes in *A STUDY IN TERROR*, but Robert Morley all but stole the show as Mycroft Holmes.



With this information, Lestrade is all for arresting "the entire garrison of the Tower of London," but Holmes doesn't buy the military theory, instead warning the inspector to prepare himself for more deaths:

Holmes: These are apparently motiveless murders by a deranged mind. Where there is no motive there can be no reason to stop.

Murray: That is only conjecture, Holmes!

Holmes: All circumstantial evidence is conjecture, Murray. But it is often right.

Lestrade: Mr. Holmes is usually right.

Holmes has another piece of telling dialogue in the mortuary scene, when he suggests that Lestrade look for "someone living alone, close to the scene of the murders, who can either return quickly to the safety of his home or can bundle his outer clothes into a safe hiding place."

The following day, a disguised Holmes follows Murray's niece, Sally Young (Judi Dench, before Dame Judi claimed her), from the hostel to the nearby residence of . . . Lord Carfax! The script lifts some lines from Conan Doyle's "The Devil's Foot":

Holmes: I followed this young lady

Sally: I saw no one.

Holmes: That is exactly what people may expect to see when I follow them

Lord Carfax explains that he first went to the hostel in search of his brother, Michael. A man told Carfax that Michael had married a prostitute, and threatened to tell the ailing Duke unless he (the man) was given sufficient funds to buy a tavern: the Angel & Crown. Then the man told Carfax that he would find Michael at the hostel. Carfax didn't, he claims, but he became interested in Dr. Murray's good works (and good niece) and bought a house in the area—the better to be close at hand and help with their charitable ministrations to the poor.

Then, presumably, he offers to sell Holmes a bridge in Brooklyn.

That night, at the Angel & Crown, Steiner corroborates the story, and admits that his partner in crime was

Michael Osborne's wife, Angela. ("I always said she got her face and name from the angels and her heart from the devil.") Steiner swears that Angela vanished from the face of the earth, but Sherlock Holmes knows better. (Both the blackmail scheme and Angela's whereabouts are, in fact, spelled out by the name of the pub, which refers to the angel-faced hooker and the titled family to which her husband belongs.)

At this point, *A STUDY IN TERROR* has introduced, with the exception of Angela Osborne, every character essential to its action. Following the murder of yet another streetwalker (Liz Stride, played by Norma Foster) and a near riot that alerts Parliament to the "problem" in Whitechapel, the film offers a completely extraneous subplot so utterly delightful that not once does the viewer resent its inclusion.

Mycroft Holmes arrives on the scene!

Before a *STUDY IN TERROR*, the character of Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock's smarter (and fatter) brother, had appeared in some TV adaptations of Conan Doyle's stories, but never on the big screen. No small screen, however, could accommodate Robert Morley's flamboyant performance.

The Prime Minister (Cecil Parker) and Home Secretary (Dudley Foster) call in Mycroft when the Ripper murders threaten to bring down the British government. (His brother, Sherlock tells us in Conan Doyle's "The Bruce-Partington Plans," sometimes is the British government!) The potential disaster does not seem to worry Mycroft too much:

Prime Minister: You know the Home Secretary.

Mycroft: I knew your predecessor, sir. No doubt I shall soon be making the acquaintance of your successor, unless the police do a good deal better than they're doing at the moment.

Home Secretary: I have every confidence in the police

Mycroft: That must be, sir, why there's none left in the House of Commons.

Again, there is historical precedent for this sequence. Criticism of the Home Secretary and the police was rife during the fall of 1888, and, by the time

the Ripper had claimed his last victim, police commissioner Charles Warren had been forced to resign.

The elder Holmes visits Baker Street, where we are treated to some parry and thrust between the brothers—though, since Mycroft has been asked by the Prime Minister to involve Sherlock in the Ripper case, and since Sherlock is already involved, the scene is superfluous. Still, the film would be poorer for Mycroft's absence, and the scene ends with yet another nod to reality: Lestrade arrives with a letter from "Yours truly, Jack the Ripper."

"Dear Boss, I keep hearing that the police have caught me but they won't fix me yet. I have to laugh when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. I am down on whores and won't rest till I do get buckled . . . I love my work and want to start again . . ."

Before the letter, there was no Jack the Ripper. He was either "the Whitechapel murderer" or "Leather Apron." The letter, written in red ink and delivered to the Central News Agency on September 27, 1888, was hardly the first purporting to come from the killer, but it was the first to give him his immortal name. (It is now generally accepted that the letter did not actually come from the killer, but was rather the creation of an enterprising journalist.)

Holmes theorizes that the Ripper now hopes to create fear without killing, and insists that the message be published. Mycroft is opposed ("You are asking Her Majesty's ministers to aid and abet Jack the Ripper!"), but the matter has already been decided: Lestrade is under orders to suppress it.

"Then I warn you," warns Sherlock Holmes. "Put every available man you have on the streets of Whitechapel."

Mary Kelly (Edina Ronay) is the final victim of the Ripper in *A STUDY IN TERROR*, just as she is believed to have been the final victim of the Ripper in reality. (Two further murdered women, Alice McKenzie and Frances Coles, are sometimes included on the list, which officially numbers nine—though only five names are thought to be irrefutable.)

Just as it happened in 1888, Mary is the only prostitute killed indoors, but *STUDY* departs from the facts by having her live (and die) in an upstairs, rather than ground floor, room. She is also killed and horribly mutilated in a matter of seconds, when in actuality the Ripper had to have toiled for hours at his ghoulish work, so severe were the mutilations. (Among other atrocities, Mary's breasts, uterus, kidneys, and liver were removed—hardly the work of a moment.)

Our heroes are in the vicinity and, at the sound of Mary's screams, Watson rushes to the nearest police station, while Holmes gives chase to the murderer. The trail leads to the mortuary and hostel, but the Ripper eludes the Great Detective, who, moments later, finds Lord Carfax sweating over a tureen of hot soup. Holmes confronts Dr. Murray and finally learns the story behind the disappearance of Michael Osborne—who is, of course, the Simpleton.

According to the doctor, Michael ("one of the finest young men I have ever met") had been helping in the hostel for six months when he learned of his wife's blackmail scheme. An argument ensued, and Stein-

er brutally beat Michael to the point of death. Then Angela grabbed a bottle of acid and was about to toss it at her husband when something happened—Murray is vague on this point—and her plan backfired. ("Her angel face was now a diabolical sight.") Michael Osborne's body survived the beating, but his mind did not. Tragically, so changed was he by his ordeal that not even his own brother has recognized him! (The film hints early on that Carfax may indeed have recognized Michael. Holmes asks his Lordship if he has "heard from" his brother, and then, more pointedly, if he has "seen him" but this makes little sense, since Holmes, at this juncture in the story, is unaware that Michael Osborne is, as he later describes him, "a pathetic imbecile" incapable of speech. Nevertheless, Carfax looks just a little bit guilty . . .)

Barring Lord Carfax's failure to recognize his sibling, this is a reasonable solution to the mystery of Michael Osborne, but the script quickly tops it. Following a stop at the latest murder scene, where we find a Lestrade more human than any previously seen on screen ("You'll never see anything like it this side of hell. What animal could have done this?"), Holmes and Watson pay a visit to the Angel & Crown. There they confront the horribly scarred Angela Osborne (the magnificent Adrienne Corri), whose story differs considerably from Dr. Murray's.

For starters, we learn that it was Angela who sent the medical case to Sherlock Holmes. Her motive for doing so was to interest the sleuth in Michael Osborne, a likely candidate for the position of Ripper—likely, that is, if you accept Angela's analysis her husband's character over Murray's:

Angela: To Dr. Murray, Michael was a saint, but to me Michael was a man who tired easily. He seemed unbalanced at times. His father had cut him off, so he thought up a way to get money from his brother.

Holmes: His was the blackmailing scheme?

Angela: Who else? Why do you think he sent Max to young Carfax instead of to his father? Because Michael's father would never give him another penny. Michael's father knew him. Knew him for what he was . . . a vicious, worthless libertine.

Holmes: Vicious?

Angela: Don't you call a man who throws acid into his wife's face vicious?

This is an altogether more sensible explanation of past events, since it solves not only the mystery of Michael Osborne, but that of the medical case. It also explains how Max knew which Osborne to blackmail, and clears up the murky business of the acid bottle. (It doesn't exactly explain how Michael was thrashed into idiocy, but it isn't too great a stretch to imagine Steiner beating him for his attack on Angela.)

The screenplay follows this scene with some brief dialogue between Holmes and Watson:

Watson: By God, Holmes! There's an attractive woman!

Holmes: You're right, my friend. It's the spirit that matters! The mind and the spirit!

The film, however, omits this exchange and reverses itself, muddying the waters it has just been at pains to clear up:

Watson: By God, Holmes! There's a woman of great character!

Holmes: I'm afraid, Watson, you're not probing deeply enough. Her scars extend far beyond the surface. She may well believe her strange story to be the truth.

Better that the Great Detective had said that Dr. Murray may well believe his strange story, for if Angela Osborne's narrative must be discredited, then too much of *A STUDY IN TERROR* remains unresolved. Ah, well, Sherlock Holmes never did place much trust in women.

The Baker Street duo return Michael Osborne to stately Shire House, where Holmes sets a cunning trap for Jack the Ripper by mentioning the current whereabouts of Angela. (By now everyone but Watson must know that Saucy Jack is really Lord Carfax.) The Duke of Shires welcomes home his prodigal son with surprising tenderness. (Barry Jones is so much better here than it is almost as though the part had been given to another actor.)

That night, acting on an insane impulse to protect the family name (his brother, after all, married a common woman of the streets) Lord Carfax breaks into the Angel & Crown and tries to carve one last hooker. Waiting for him, however, is Mr. Sherlock Holmes—and, following a frenzied struggle, Jack the Ripper perishes in a blaze that also takes the lives of Max Steiner and Angela Osborne.

Watson: But how on earth did you get out of it, Holmes?

Holmes: You know my methods, Watson. I'm well known to be indestructible.

The movie ends with Mrs. Hudson (Barbara Leake) delivering another parcel to her famous lodger's rooms. Happily, it's not a medical case this time, but a battered old hat. Holmes and Watson tackle *A STUDY IN TERROR*'s final problem, namely, the adventure of The Blue Carbuncle—as the picture fades and the credits roll.

"Robert Morley was such a character," remembers *A STUDY IN TERROR*'s executive producer, Herman Cohen, "and he was just as pompous as he was in the film. I remember, we were doing a scene and he said, 'I've a dinner party. I'm going to leave, now.' I said, 'What do you mean? We gotta get off this set by tomorrow.' He said, 'Let's work tomorrow.' I said, 'What? Bring the crew in on Saturday?' He said, 'My dear boy, I couldn't care less. There's going to be wonderful food, and I wouldn't miss this party for the world. And he didn't!'

Cohen had less trouble with the rest of the cast ("English actors are so professional!"), but he even managed to forgive his errant Mycroft. ("Well, you couldn't stay angry, because Morley was such a delight to be with.") The man who gave the world *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* (1957), *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM* (1959), and *TROG* (1970) went on to praise his players:

"John Fraser was a wonderful actor. He was in *EL CID*, and after that I thought something big might

happen with his career. But I don't think he was managed right. He does a lot of stage work.

"Adrienne Corri was a lovely gal and very very professional. Judi Dench was very close, at the time, to John Neville, and it was Neville who recommended her for the movie. She worked with him in his Nottingham Playhouse. She's Dame Judith, now.

"Frank Finlay, who played Inspector Lestrade, was a terrific actor. Of course, he played the same part in another Sherlock Holmes picture after *A STUDY IN TERROR*." (The picture was *MURDER BY DECREE*, and, in addition to Finlay, Anthony Quayle also found himself in a second Holmes versus the Ripper movie—this time as Commissioner Charles Warren!)

A STUDY IN TERROR's cast is indeed impressive (besides those already mentioned, it includes boxer Terry Downes as Chunky and Georgia Brown, the original Nancy in Lionel Bart's *OLIVER!*, as the Angel & Crown's brassy saloon singer), and so were most of its reviews. Said *Time* magazine: "Bonds may come and Maigrets may go, but Holmes goes on forever. *TERROR* is a sly and stylish send-up...." The *Daily News*' Kathleen Carroll gave the film three stars, and gushed: "This snappy, handsomely mounted production has the verve it deserves, with John Neville a crisp, shockproof Holmes and Donald Houston a worshipping Watson." Even the *New York Times* grudgingly offered praise: "The super-sleuth and superkiller are well met now because a sense of humor and an unvarnished, old-fashioned melodrama raised the film several steps above the normal chiller."

More recent praise for *A STUDY IN TERROR* came from Chris Steinbrunner and Norman Michaels in *The Films of Sherlock Holmes* ("It was an excellent contribution to the genre... more sexually explicit than any Holmesian cinematic adventure had been before it.") and from Steve Simels in the March 1989 edition of *Video Review*:

"... *A STUDY IN TERROR* more than lives up to its splendid premise. In fact, it just may be one of the best Holmes movies ever made—certainly the best ever made in color."

The film's background score marked John Scott's debut and, if the beat, beat, beat of the bongos in Victorian England momentarily jars, the music includes a haunting main theme that lends the proceedings a moody, slightly melancholy air. Long out of print and coveted by collectors, the soundtrack album was released by Roulette Records. There was also a 45 rpm recording by Don Costa of the "Lovers Theme from *A STUDY IN TERROR*," (now there's something to play for a hot night on the sofa) and a vocal by Kathy Keegan on ABC-Paramount Records.

Since *A STUDY IN TERROR* first bloodied our motion-picture screens in 1966, Sherlock Holmes has faced Jack the Ripper time and again on film (*MURDER BY DECREE*) and in print (Edward B. Hanna's 1992 *The Whitechapel Horrors*, among many others). In more than one ill-considered instance, Sherlock himself has turned out to be Saucy Jack! Several of these rematches are not without merit, but for many *A STUDY IN TERROR* was not only there first—it was (and is) best.





Alan Curtis battles the most fearsome of fiends in **PHILO VANCE'S GAMBLE** (1947): a child actress!

vault, where he finds a diving suit. Finally, he explains the crime: Stamm owed Monty considerable money, and Monty was using the debt to make Stamm pressure his sister into marrying him. So Stamm donned the diving suit, killed Monty, and hid his body in the pothole.

In the book, only Stamm was not near the pool when Monty disappeared, which readily points to him as the murderer, even though he was supposedly too drunk to move. With so few human suspects, Wright shifts the emphasis to an imaginary dragon! The film adjusts this slightly by having another man go indoors for drinks just before Monty dives, but the change does not make much difference.

Instead of detecting, in *DRAGON* Vance simply finds obvious things—claw marks, the body, the diving suit—that even Heath would have discovered. His reenactment of events is both reckless and unnecessary; if he had used the rediscovered key to enter the vault first, he would have established at least as much as his little charade did. Perhaps Vance wanted to intimidate Stamm—dazed and waterlogged, he confirms Vance's explanation of events—but if so, that is not established.

How did Vance solve the mystery? He doesn't explain how he knew about Stamm's debt, so that must be just a lucky guess. The rest is based on a single fact—the dirt of a potted plant near Stamm's chair smelled of whiskey. From this, Vance concluded that Stamm poured his liquor there and hadn't really been drunk. Earlier, we had seen Vance finish a cigarette and, finding no ashtray, put it out in the plant's soil, but recalling that doesn't give the viewer much satisfaction.

The novel at least follows Vance as he penetrates the household's intricacies, but the film presented that information in the first scenes. The supposed atmosphere of gloom and horror hanging over the mansion could have been used to keep the viewer occupied, but director H. Bruce Humberstone does not try to draw on the horror film's visual conventions. Nor does he employ Michael Curtiz's cinematic ingenuity to keep the viewer from noticing the plot's emptiness. Instead, he slows things down, and we watch characters walk into and out of rooms, through hallways, and up and down staircases. The actors deliver their dialogue at much the same rate. Visually, the most Humberstone offers

is an occasional foreground fish tank or dragon statue. Even Dr. Doremus just goes through the motions, repeating the complaints he had voiced in *KENNEL*. (Etienne Girardot's energy, however, provides a welcome contrast to the other actors' lassitude.)

The writers who adapted *The Casino Murder Case* accomplish what *DRAGON*'s scripters didn't: Recognizing that *Casino* replaces detection with character revelation, they avoid introducing the suspects before Vance enters. In the first scene, we meet Vance (Paul Lukas) fencing with his butler; he also receives an anonymous letter warning of danger to Lynn Llewellyn (Donald Cook) and urging him to visit the casino owned by Lynn's uncle, Richard Kinkaid (Arthur Byron). Next, Vance crosses paths with Mrs. Llewellyn (Alison Skipworth) at an auction, where he smashes the cupid that she wanted and is attracted to her secretary, Doris Reed (Rosalind Russell). When a duplicate statue turns up, Vance brings it to her, and we and he encounter the rest of the household. Only later, at the casino, does the mystery begin as Lynn collapses, poisoned, and his wife, Virginia (Louise Henry), dies of poison at the house.

The ingenuity of *CASINO* lies less in how the crime was committed (poisoned eyewash) than in the way the killer planted clues. In the book, he had intended that Vance see certain clues as misleading and discount them; others—related to the presence of water—were planted to be seen as "real" clues falsely implicating Kinkaid, who has secretly been manufacturing heavy water. The film simplifies matters by eliminating the first layer of misleading clues, but remains faithful to the basic concept.

Also in keeping with Wright's format, Vance participates in an evolving situation. To gain insight into the suspects' personalities, he interacts with them, and eventually even provokes action. Amelia (Isabel Jewell), Lynn's sister, angrily declares to Vance, "You come here peeking and prying and dragging out all the family secrets and you don't do anything." As he moves through the household, interested but wary, Vance notices "a few sign posts. Not many, but enough to see where they are pointing. . . . That's the trouble—they may have been put up deliberately to lead us in the wrong direction." It is not, however, clear why Vance feels that the water clues might be pointing in the wrong direction.

A good illustration of Vance's method occurs after Virginia Llewellyn's death. Vance tells Kinkaid that "Mrs. Llewellyn" was poisoned and, in a two-shot, we see him watch Kinkaid's response. When Kinkaid reveals his assumption that the victim is his sister, not her daughter-in-law, we realize that Vance had been intentionally ambiguous to test the man's reaction.

The film handles its characters well. When we first meet them, the group almost has the eccentric humor of a screwball-comedy family, with Alison Skipworth delightfully dotty as the old mother who brings home beautiful junk from auctions. After placing a newly-acquired statuette on the mantel near a portrait, she decides she can't have "that half-nude woman next to father." Her brother retorts, "Oh, he wouldn't mind." Soon, though, the banter develops a harder edge, and what seemed at first like teasing reveals real dislike.

As the story progresses, the characters develop more dimension. Kinkaid's honest bluntness reveals its tougher side when he declares about Lynn, "At times

neck." He falls from his horse and dies. Later, Lowe Hammle (Gene Lockhart) appears to have shot himself with an old duelling pistol taken from a wall display, but Vance thinks that a woman shot him—a man would have picked the nearby Colt automatic, but "to a woman, a gun's a gun." People claim to have heard the Major talking in the room before the shooting, but Hammle's nephew insists that the Major was with him. Before long, the Major's wife dies in a fall from the upper level of a bus; when leaving the house, she seemed dazed and said, "I'm going to get killed." Was she pushed by Zalia Graem (Virginia Bruce), Hammle's niece, who had followed close behind?

Aside from the deduction about females and guns, Vance interacts with the suspects but doesn't draw any conclusions until Zalia mentions that her uncle once did vocal impressions in vaudeville. When the two take refuge from the rain in a zoo, Vance explains to Zalia that the python "hypnotizes" its prey, which then dies willingly. He now figures out the solution: The Major, who had learned how in the East, hypnotized his wife's lover, Floyd Garden, and programmed him to fall from the horse. Meanwhile, the English Nurse Beeton (Benita Hume) tried to force Hammle, her ex lover, into marriage; to get rid of her he phoned the immigration service, hiding his identity by imitating the Major's voice. The Major's wife overheard and, thinking the man on the phone to be her husband, shot Hammle. Realizing that his wife was a threat to him, the Major programmed her to fall from the bus.

In the finale, the Major "hypnotizes" Vance and, after revealing his guilt, orders him to step off the ledge. At the last second, Heath (Nat Pendleton) enters and shoots the Major. Vance, as he had in *CASINO*, was just pretending in order to manipulate Heath into killing the murderer. (Writer Bertram Millhauser reused this situation in his screenplay for the 1945 Sherlock Holmes film, *THE WOMAN IN GREEN*.)

Though not as lively as *CASINO* or as full of entertaining scenes, *THE GARDEN MURDER CASE* maintains interest because its characters, like those in *CASINO*, are sympathetic in their flaws and frailties. Only Jessie Ralph, vividly vicious as the insulting old mother, provides no redeeming overtones. Nurse Beeton is simultaneously victim and victimizer; Zalia, seemingly well balanced, allows herself to depend on her uncle's money; the nephew, "sick of smothering in uncle's rancid money," accepts a job at that uncle's mine in Paraguay because it's "easy money and made sitting down." Hammle himself may be ruthless, but his relatives permit him to dominate them; hearing of his death, Zalia comments, "poor crook." Etienne Girardot returns for his last appearance as Dr. Doremus, who solves the problem of having his meals interrupted by bringing a sandwich: "From now on, I eat with the corpse!"

By 1937, in *Variety's* words, "Philo Vancers have petered out as first-string mystery fare," so *NIGHT OF MYSTERY* received no *New York Times* review, and *Variety* caught it in a theater in Lincoln, Nebraska! The film remains elusive, but William K. Everson praised the "lively and pictorially atmospheric" visual style of German director E. A. Dupont. The cast of characters suggests that it might be a faithful version of *The Greene Murder Case* and, however minor the film, it has to be more faithful to Vance's style than is *THE GRACIE ALLEN MURDER CASE*.

In *ALLEN*, Vance does not enter until nearly one-third of its length has passed, and very little of the rest is spent detecting. As a result, the script forces Vance (Warren William) to report actions that were never shown, produce evidence that we didn't know he had, and state conclusions without explaining their basis.

After examining a body, Vance declares that he was "the victim of a rare and subtle poison, the traces of which evaporated on his being immersed in the river." We have no idea why he decides this, given that the poison left no trace. Later, when Gracie encounters Vance in the apartment of Benny "the Buzzard" Nelson (Lee Moore), he announces that he found, in a wall safe, "documents leading me to believe that Mr. Mirche's lady friend knows lots more than we'd suspected." His vagueness irritates, but what is worse, we don't even get to see him in action.

A newspaper headline stating that Mirche's lady friend, Dixie (Judith Barrett), was found poisoned deprives us of another potentially interesting scene. At the climax, Vance reveals that he found a certificate of marriage between Dixie and the Buzzard in the safe and that Dixie's fingerprints were found on a certain pencil, which we didn't know existed. Vance's dialogue about the rare poison might have been intended to spoof the detective's omniscience, but Warren William plays it straight, so we can't be certain. In the other examples, the writer is clearly dismissing the mystery to provide more screen time for Gracie Allen.

With the outbreak of war in Europe, Warner Bros. must have sifted through its properties for something that might be rendered timely. Perhaps inspired by the international nature of the characters in *THE KENNEL MURDER CASE* (British, Italian, Oriental), the studio remade it as *CALLING PHILO VANCE*—an espionage film, of sorts. Vance (James Stephenson) has joined the Secret Service and, in Vienna, seeks proof that Archer Coe (Richard Kipling) plans to sell the design for his new bomber to a foreign power. Disguised as a farmer, Vance almost succeeds in his mission, but is caught at the last minute and deported. Eventually, he returns to his New York apartment, his butler, and Captain MacTavish. With Markham and Heath (renamed Ryan), he visits Coe and is present at the body's discovery.

From here on, the espionage aspect becomes irrelevant, and Tom Reed's script closely follows that of *KENNEL*, even to some of its dialogue. Coe's bomber plans readily replace his collection of Chinese porcelain as the item sought by several suspects, and the characters possess the same romantic conflicts that they had in 1933. Director William Clemens borrows Michael Curtiz's more striking camera positions (through a keyhole, from inside a closet), with airplane models instead of vases filling the foreground shelves in some shots.

Although Clemens directs efficiently, he doesn't use film technique as dynamically as Curtiz did. When Vance reveals Brisbane's cane, for example, the camera follows as he leads the others to it, whereas Curtiz used cutting, closeups, camera movement, and a mirror to give the event energy and visual variety. On the other hand, these characters obtain Brisbane's bag from the railroad station in even fewer shots that Curtiz used: Clemens dissolves to a closeup of it being pulled out of storage and pans with it to a medium view of an official at the counter, then dissolves to a closeup of it already on the table, being opened.

In several small ways, *CALLING PHILO VANCE* subtly improves on the original film. As in the novel, the 1933 Vance used a book to learn the purpose of the pins and string found in Brisbane's pocket; this time, Vance has no such crutch and decides what to do with them on his own. The lipstick holder found in a wastebasket in 1933 had Hilda Lake's name on it, which made it easy for Vance to identify the owner (and made it hard to believe that she had thrown it away); this script, like the novel, has Vance identify the owner by the type of lipstick. During KENNEL's final explanation of events, Vance used an elaborate scale model of the houses, which couldn't have been built so quickly and is hardly used; this version is content with some much more practical floor plans.

James Conlon makes a suitably wiry, cranky Doremus and, as Heath/Ryan, Edward Brophy teases Vance about getting caught in Vienna but resists the obtuseness provided in *CASINO* by Ted Healy, in *GARDEN* by Nat Pendleton, and in *GRACIE ALLEN* by William Demarest. Although clearly not original, *CALLING PHILO VANCE* holds up as an above-average detective film. If one must copy, it might as well be from the best.

With private-eye films popular in the 1940s, someone could have noticed how Wright's novels overlapped with that type of story. No such luck. A radio series and a trio of films simply cashed in on the new wave by recreating Vance. In *CASINO*, a character knew about Vance from "his" books; in *PHILO VANCE'S GAMBLE*, a child recognizes his name because, as her uncle says, "She listens to too many of those whodunnit programs on the radio." *THE LADY IN THE LAKE* (1946) had Philip Marlowe consider writing a story for a detective magazine, so in *PHILO VANCE'S SECRET MISSION* Vance (Alan Curtis) is asked by the publisher of a similar magazine to help him write a novel. In *GAMBLE*, Vance (Curtis again) echoes Sam Spade in *THE MALTESE FALCON* (1941) by letting those in search of a missing emerald think he has it, then offering to make a deal.

This Vance may drop his G's, but out of urban earthiness, not languid elegance ("Nothin' can happen while I'm protectin' ya"); the police dislike him, and he's no stranger to slugging and being slugged. This tough, mean-streets quality reaches a point of self-parody when Vance holds a gun on an intruder, a new intruder holds a gun on him, and Vance's assistant shows up to hold a gun on him, with all four frozen in a kind of lineup.

The new Vance is neither observant nor smart. In *PHILO VANCE RETURNS*, when entering his room,

Vance (William Wright) automatically throws the light switch, only to realize that the light had been on and he'd just turned it off. At a murder site in *GAMBLE*, he taunts the cops, "Now, let's see what you've undoubtedly overlooked," then proceeds to overlook the jar of cold cream that holds the emerald.

The echoes of Wright's work are faint. *RETURNS* features an angry mother who hates her son's ex-wives (a relative, perhaps, of Wright's matriarchs), and it offers the ingenious, if unlikely, murder method of mixing poison with bubble bath and lipstick. *GAMBLE* includes a policeman rather arbitrarily named Heath, the Los Angeles District Attorney sends his regards to Markham in New York, and Vance (Alan Curtis) makes a glancing reference to psychology when he dismisses one suspect, saying, "The emotional type kills on impulse—she wouldn't have planned it that way."

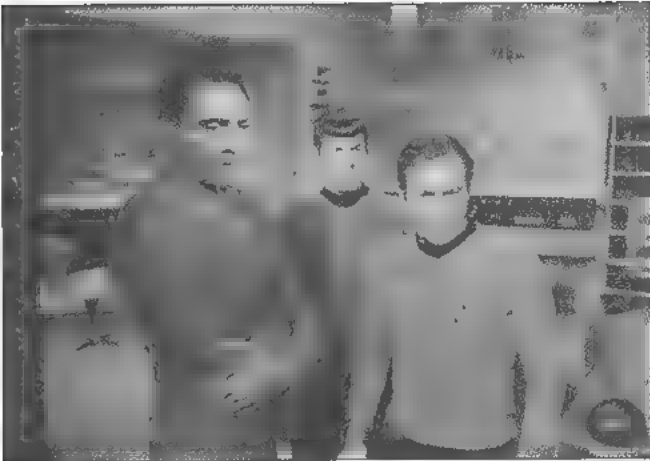
Some of the films' more entertaining moments occur in *PHILO VANCE RETURNS*, thanks to the mangled English of an excitable Russian (Leon Belasco): "When I find him I will kill him limb from limb until he is very dead." *PHILO VANCE'S GAMBLE* contains perhaps the oddest moment, involving the most extreme gay stereotype since Hollywood started enforcing the Production Code: a prissy male secretary who chides, "You're so hasty!" as he files his nails. This film's unexpected fascination with homosexuality continues when, during a search, a policeman says he's "crazy about perfume" and dabs on some that he's found; his superior yells, "You smell like a chorus girl the day after Christmas—what is the police force coming to? . . . Go away—I might forget myself and kiss you."

After *CALLING PHILO VANCE* in 1940, our gentleman detective slipped into vague legend, recalled now only as an irritating cliché—but the original sources remain. Wright's novels require a scriptwriter, a director, and an actor who understand the dynamic of the character, who recognize the value of implication, and who can work with looks and gestures as well as words and objects. Together, they could devise productions that combine a shrewd and complex central character, inventive plots, and suspects who reveal the resonant vulnerability of human beings under pressure. Some of the film adaptations accomplished some of this; the time may be ripe for another try.



Paul M. Jensen, who teaches film appreciation at SUNY-Oneonta, is the author of Boris Karloff and His Films. Many thanks to Joseph Baldwin for providing access to his collection of Vance novels.

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TOP to BOTTOM: William Marshall on STAR TREK and as BLACULA, Robert Quarry in SPIRITS (with Brinke Stevens) and in HAUNTING FEAR.

WILLIAM MARSHALL

Continued from page 50

didn't have a lot of time to prepare for it, but I was very pleased upon seeing it. It worked for me.

SS: Much has been made of the ego problems on the set with William Shatner.

WM: There are egomaniacal things that go on whenever humans are concerned, but Shatner had a self-love beyond anything I have ever seen! (Laughs)

SS: You appeared in one of Sabu's last movies: SABU AND THE MAGIC GENIE.

WM: I remember Sabu, who had played the Elephant Boy, being afraid to get on top of the elephant. He was a racehorse fanatic, actually, and he spent most of his spare time placing his bets through the day.

SS: You also appeared in THE BOSTON STRANGLER.

WM: I had scenes with Henry Fonda. Fonda wasn't particularly pleasant. Whenever I reached out to him—asking him if we could have coffee, for example, or something along those lines—he'd say, "No. I'm not gonna have time. I'm gonna have to go." So much for that!

SS: You dropped out of films for a while, but recently came back for Fred Olen Ray.

WM: For what?

SS: You recently returned to films for producer Fred Olen Ray. You made SORCERESS with Linda Blair.

WM: Oh! I'd forgotten all about that! (Laughs) It was good fun.

SS: What are your current plans?

WM: I'm doing theater, now, and just cranking up something that I began about 10 years ago, when I had this play on the life and times of Frederick Douglas. I feel an obligation to get a decent film made on that incredible life. People are going to films, again. It's by way of film that anybody's going to have any sense of what's going on in this country. Few people read the papers on a regular basis. And even if they did, they

wouldn't necessarily have a grasp of what needs to be done to make some sanity come to life in this America of ours. We've got to get over this nonsense of pitting people against each other. Do that in a boxing ring or something, but not in the neighborhoods—not when the lives of young people are going to pot, with kids shooting each other and doing all sorts of vile things. It's one of the most despicable things that has occurred in any society in the history of Man.

SS: Douglas was a man who wanted human dignity for everyone.

WM: Can't live without it. Can't survive.

ROBERT QUARRY

Continued from page 47

laughed hard on that movie. But I was always kind of amazed that she dumped it like it had never happened to her.

SS: Mariette Hartley is such a good actress.

RQ: She's a really good actress, and a really neat lady. I was so glad she finally met some nice guy and had a couple of kids.

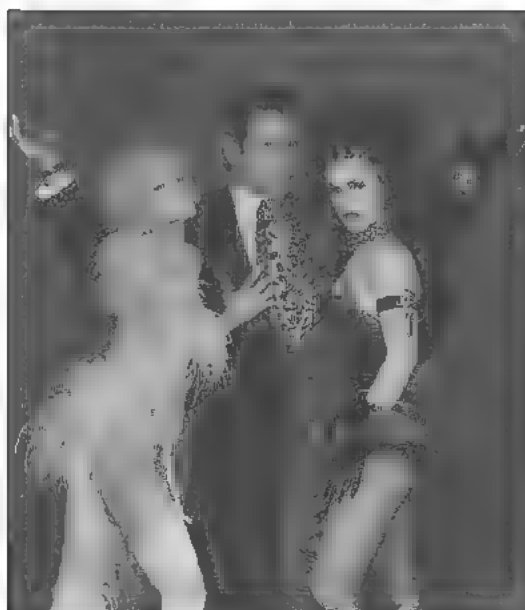
SS: Well, we've covered just about everything. Is there anything you want to say about Fred Olen Ray?

RQ: No! I don't wanna say anything nice about Fred! (Laughs) Really, He's my best friend, and you never speak well of your best friends. You know that!

SS: Well, thanks for talking to us.

RQ: Well, I don't know what you're gonna do with all this crap. Just throw something together.

BLACULA
& YORGA
on Video!
See Page 26



LEFT: Two-Face (Tommy Lee Jones) has a girl for each side of his nature: Sugar (Drew Barrymore) and Spice (Debi Maser).

FIRST TIME AT BAT

Continued from page 57

ing. "Go make it! Just go make it!" (Laughs) But nobody really understood it. People came to me and said, "Look, are you making a comedy or a horror movie?" And I'd say, "Yes." A lot of people said that the two genres could not work together, so I said, "Well, then we gotta pray, because that's what I'm doing!" But again, as with *BATMAN FOREVER*, I had a fabulous cast. I'm a very cast-dependent director. I love my cast!

SS: Some directors don't particularly like actors.

JS: I know. I have director friends who hate actors. I tell you, I don't know how they go to work. It's like a painter hating paint, you know? I mean, I don't get it. I think it's the way some men say they hate women, 'cause they're afraid of them.

When men are afraid of women, it's because they don't understand the emotional tenor, and therefore it's threatening to them. I think it's the same with actors. To some people, actors seem like hysterical, high-strung children who are going to need something, and people think, "I don't want them to need it from me." I hate neo-Nazis, you know what I mean? I think they're really good to hate. Actors, I love

SS: You've worked with a lot of Hollywood's hottest young actors in *THE LOST BOYS* and *ST. ELMO'S FIRE*. How does Chris O'Donnell measure up?

JS: A star. I've been in love with him since *MEN DON'T LEAVE*, when he was only a kid, and I thought, "What a performance!" And *SCENT OF A WOMAN*—you've got to be a pretty great actor to share the screen with Al Pacino for a couple of hours. Chris did an amazing job of holding his side of the screen. You have to be a great actor just to get the role. Imagine how many boys they must have interviewed for that part—and imagine how many boys wanted it.

SS: Last issue, we spoke with Michael Gough, who plays Alfred in the Batman films.

JS: Oh! I love him so much! He's Heaven on Earth! It's a gift working with him. It is a gift I wish he was in every moment of every movie I direct. (Laughs) He and his wife are two of the most extraordinary people, and he is one of those

actors who can not do a bad reading on a line. He simply can't do a bad reading. Well, he's a great English theater actor, you know. It's in the genes.

SS: You've adhered pretty closely to Robin's original origin. Did you use a professional circus for the film, or did you put one together?

JS: We put one together. We called the man who did the trapeze stuff for *TRAPEZE*, and then Mitch Gaylord, the Olympic gold-medal winner, did a lot of the Robin doubling.

SS: Describe an average day on the *BATMAN FOREVER* set.

JS: Well, one day I told Chris O'Donnell he shouldn't drive the Batmobile because it was too expensive and he was going to crack it up. I gave him a hard time, and he said, "No, I can do it." And he promptly took off and smashed into a curb. It was like a father with his teenage son. "I don't think you ought to drive that car; you know how expensive and delicate it is, Chris." "No, Dad, I can handle it!" Crash! I never said a word. I just knew how embarrassed he was. Besides, he is much younger and much stronger and he would have killed me. Everybody was in such great shape on this movie, they could have decked me in a minute! (Laughs)

SS: If you're asked, will you sign on for the next Batman movie?

JS: If I get lucky enough to pull this one off, after I finish getting off my knees thanking God, then I'll decide what I'm going to do! (Laughs)

GOTHAM'S CITIZENS KANE

Continued from page 62

Ward, hit the TV screens. "Unfortunately, I wasn't creative consultant on the show. I met Lorenzo Semple Jr., who did the first script for the show, and he said, 'Come on out to Hollywood.' But by the time I got there, I'd lost the ball. Hollywood's the kind of place where you've gotta be here and not in New York or New Jersey or the Bronx. They forget you when you're 3,000 miles away. At one point, I thought Hollywood was very shallow, but I've relocated, now, and I love the coast. Except for the earthquakes and mudslides, it's a beautiful town!"

Kane gives high marks to the most recent TV incarnation of the Dark Knight: *BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES* (recently renamed *THE ADVENTURES OF BATMAN AND ROBIN*). "Oh, that's really nouveau art! That's terrific! We won two Emmys with that. When I was a kid, I worked for Fleischer Studios, who

did Betty Boop and Popeye in New York. They also did Superman as an animated cartoon—three dimensional, with all the shadows and the mood. This Batman series is reminiscent of the early Superman animation. It's just one of the greatest series."

Asked if he could have imagined back in the 1930s that he would be promoting a 1995 megafilm based on Batman, Bob Kane laughs. "Who thinks 50 years ahead when you're just turning 20? You think that this is it, right now, and I won't get older. I'll be just like Bruce Wayne in the comic book. I'll always remain 35.

"Who would think the name Batman would sell? Yet it became synonymous with superheroes such as Superman, which is really a more pleasant, heroic sounding name than Batman."

Perhaps *BATMAN FOREVER* is a just and proper title, after all.





More than any other motion-picture producer, Herman Cohen showed the world what monsters teenagers really are!

HERMAN COHEN

Continued from page 78

this is a great handle, and the campaign is ready to go!" If I had come back to the States earlier and seen this, I would have stopped it immediately. But it was too late. We had a completely different campaign in England, and also in Europe.

JL: *What's your opinion of the second Holmes/Ripper film, MURDER BY DECREE?*

HC: I'll tell you something: I never saw it. Everybody asked, "Are you gonna sue them? They stole your story! They stole your picture!" I was tied up in production at the time, and I just never saw the picture; I only heard that it was very similar and that they stole an awful lot of things from *A STUDY IN TERROR*. But I'm used to that, you know? After all, Michael J. Fox did *TEEN WOLF*! I don't have to tell you about people stealing ideas.

JL: *Are there any anecdotes that you'd like to relate about A STUDY IN TERROR?*

HC: Oh, yeah! You've heard of the Kray brothers, haven't you? They were the big mobsters in London. They controlled Soho. One of the Kray brothers' lieutenants had married Barbara Windsor, the little blonde in *A STUDY IN TERROR*. So there were a couple of strange guys on the set all the time when she was working.

JL: *That must have been fun*

HC: Well, she was a fun girl. She was always playing around on the set, and these two mugs came up and told me, "Look, you stay away

from Barbara Windsor. We got our eye on you." And I thought, "Who the hell are they?" I was gonna call security and have them thrown out! (Laughs) And my assistant director came running over and said, "Herm! Don't do anything! These guys are lieutenants in the biggest gang in London!" (Laughs) We had Terry Downs, the top boxer at the time. He's the one that played in the abattoir. He came over and said, "If they come near you, Herman, I'll get 'em!"

JL: *Any other stories?*

HC: We had to fly John Neville to Nottingham every Friday. We had to get a private plane and whisk John to the airport and fly him to Nottingham, 'cause he was doing a play at the same time he was doing *A STUDY IN TERROR*. I had to fly him there every weekend, and then bring him back Sunday night after his performance. A couple of times we were late, and he had to get on the plane in his Sherlock costume! (Laughs)

JL: *You produced most of your films in a period when horror and sex scenes were much less explicit than they are nowadays. If you were making your films, now, with less need for restraint, would you do it differently?*

HC: Of course.

JL: *More gore, more sex and nudity...?*

HC: Look, you have to move with the times.

JL: *Is there anything that you ever had to cut from your pictures because of censorship?*

HC: No. In fact, Geoffrey Shurlock, who preceded Jack Valenti at the MPAA—we were very close and he

always wanted a look at my pictures. The few times he wanted to cut things, I always managed to talk him out of it.

JL: *Any examples?*

HC: Well, the scene when the dog attacks Michael Landon in *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*. He wanted to cut it down, and I talked him out of it. *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*, that took at least two lunches and a couple of dinners to talk him out of it. He wanted to cut the portable guillotine and the binoculars. However, if you look at the picture, you don't see anything, really. She puts it up to her eyes, there's a cutaway, the other girl screams, you go back, there's blood running through her fingers—and then we cut to the carpet and the binoculars, which are open on the floor. So you don't really see what you think you see—and in pointing that out to Geoffrey Shurlock and his committee, they decided to let it in.

JL: *They thought they saw more than they saw.*

HC: That happened on a lot of my pictures—even *A STUDY IN TERROR*, with the killings of Jack the Ripper. We endeavored to do the killings in good taste; you didn't see blood squirting every place. *STUDY IN TERROR* is one of my best horror films. We received more letters on *A STUDY IN TERROR*—aficionados of Sherlock Holmes, saying they thought it was the best Sherlock Holmes picture ever made—than I received on virtually all my pictures outside of *TEENAGE WEREWOLF* and *BERSERK*.

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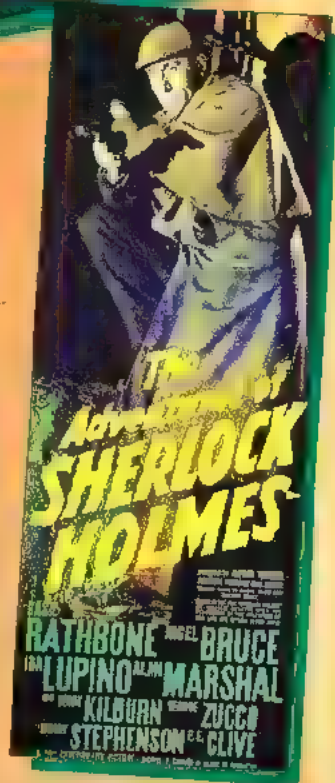
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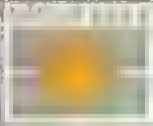
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FROM THE NOVEL BY S. S. VAN DINE
SCREENPLAY BY FLORENCE WELSH

a Paramount Picture











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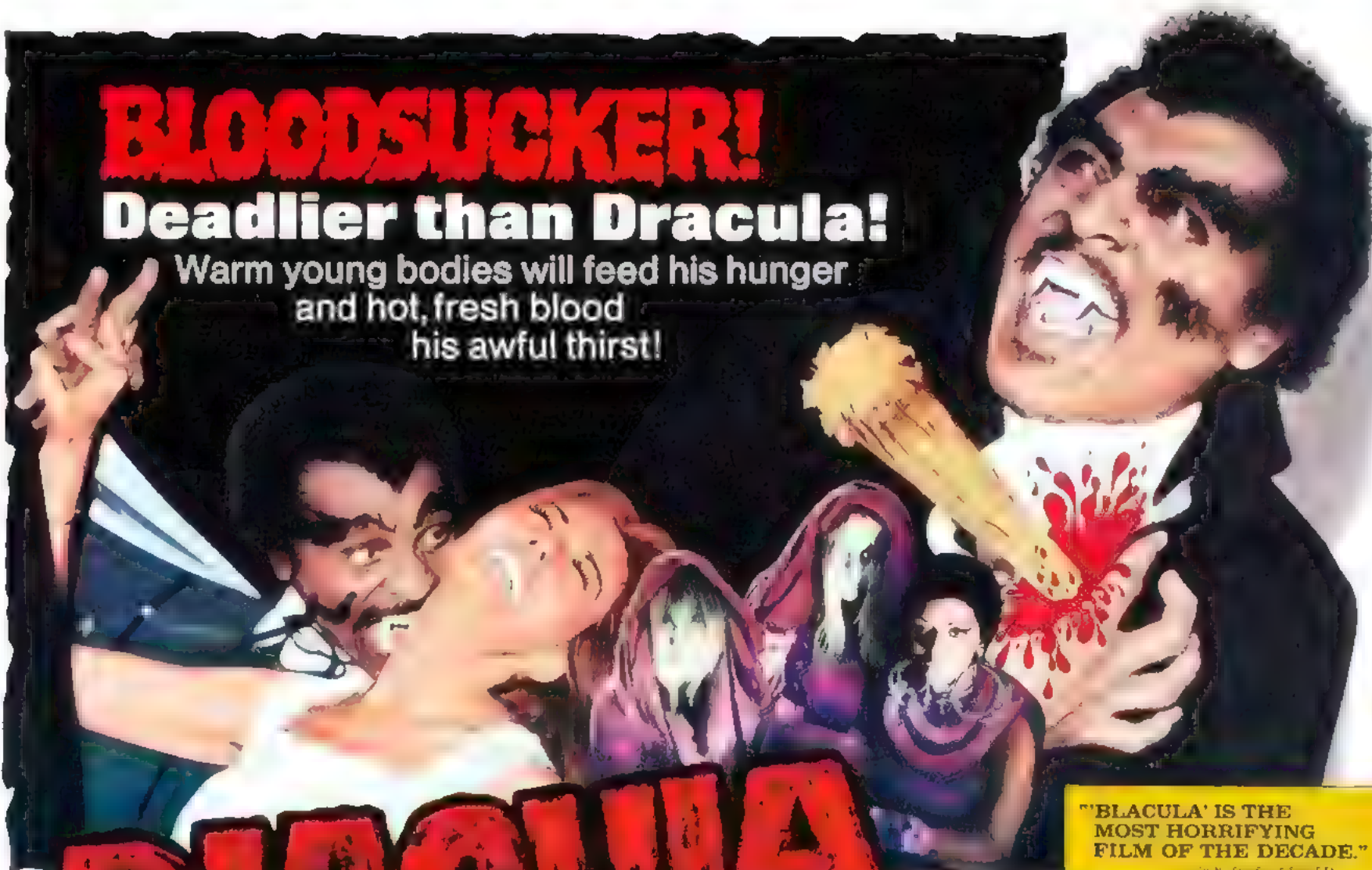
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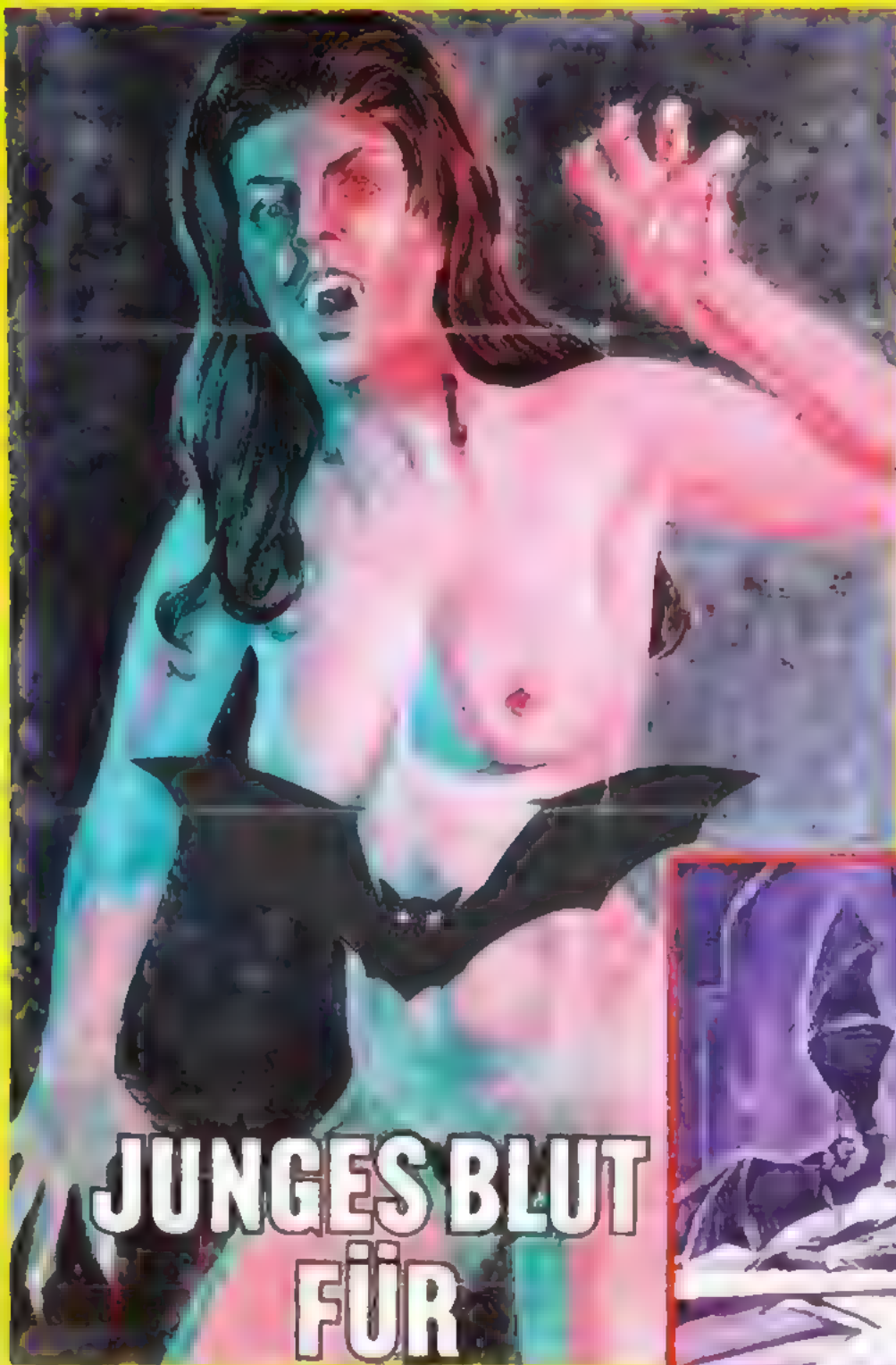
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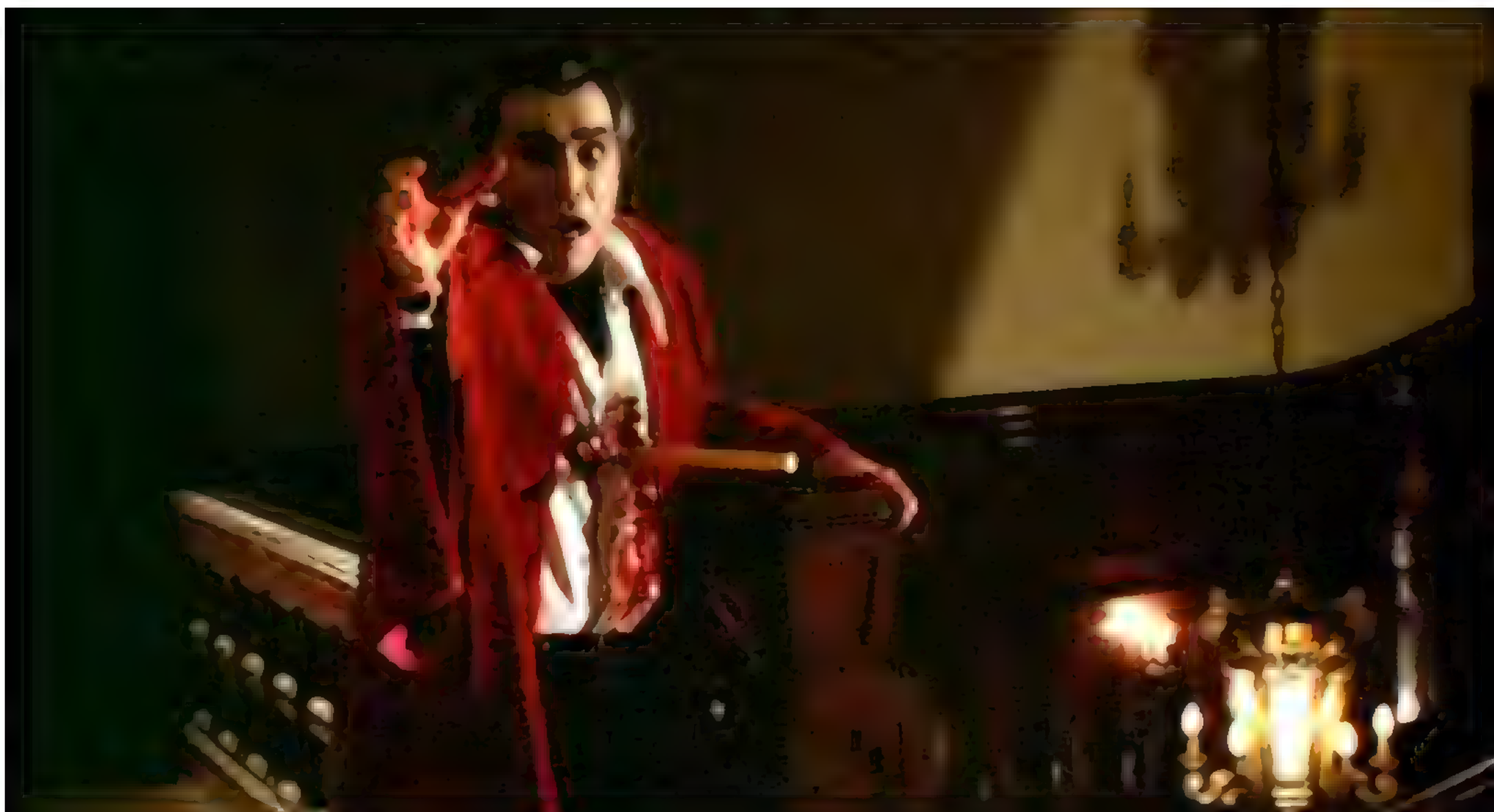
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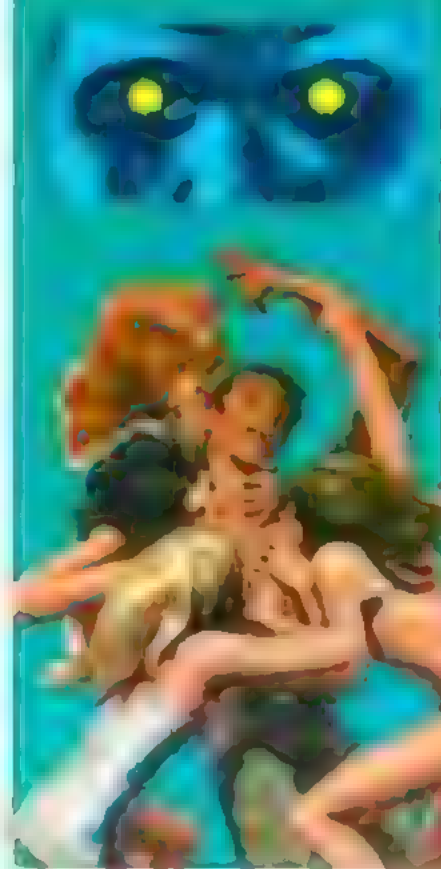






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WILLIAM
POWELL

AS
PHILO VANCE
IN

The
**Benson Murder
Case**





Frankly Scarlet



Back in 1985, there was a TV flick called BRIDGE ACROSS TIME, starring hunky David Hasselhoff in his pre-BAYWATCH days and busty Adrienne Barbeau post MAUDE. It was later retitled ARIZONA RIPPER and (for its video reincarnation) TERROR AT LONDON BRIDGE, but that needn't concern us here. What caught my eye when the telefilm first aired was its oddball premise: The malevolent spirit of our old pal, Jack the Ripper, inhabits London Bridge, which has been razed and reconstructed in Arizona as a tourist attraction.

As far as anyone knows, the real Ripp never committed any of his bloody crimes on London Bridge—or any other bridge, for that matter. Still, I've always associated Saucy Jack with just such a structure—not London's London, mind you, but New York's George Washington

Yes, strange are the workings of the mind. My mind, anyway. If you call that working . . .

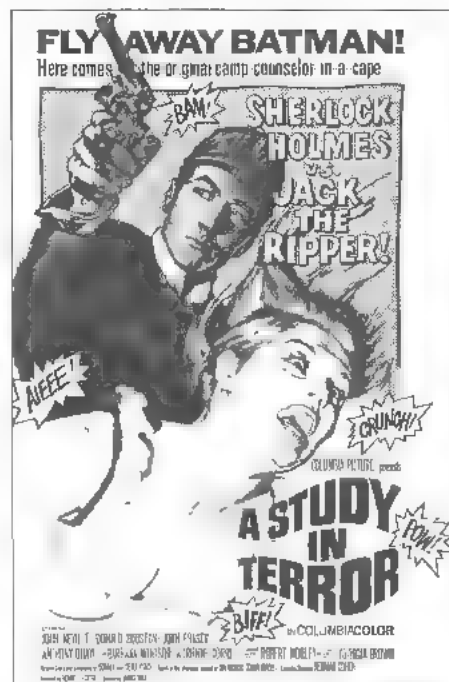
Lemme 'splain. The first time I heard the name "Jack the Ripper" was in 1960, in Brooklyn of all boroughs. Mom and I were visiting relatives that fateful day, and we'd all piled into a car to go to some now long-forgotten social event—a wedding or christening or something that held little interest for an 11-year-old horror fan. Well, cruising up Eastern Parkway, we passed a sparkling movie marquee heralding the Joseph E. Levine presentation of JACK THE RIPPER. The lurid title thrilled the little fiend within me, filling me with curiosity and a strange tingle of anticipation. (At least I think it was the lurid title, it may have been the onset of puberty.) I knew all about Frankenstein's Monster, Count Dracula, the Wolf Man, the Invisible Man, and the Mummy, but JACK THE RIPPER—now that was an appellation worth investigating!

Nevertheless, like the Wicked Witch of the West, I bided my time. With admirable fortitude I kept mum till late that night, when, free

of aunts, uncles, and cousins, Mom and I headed home to suburban New Jersey. It was while we were traveling a particularly dark and windswept off ramp of the Henry Hudson Parkway, with the hazy lights of the George Washington Bridge looming just ahead, that I asked a question posed by thousands of well over 70 years

"Who," I asked sweetly, "is Jack the Ripper?"

And Mom, who indulged my ever-burgeoning interest in the macabre, told me about the man who had killed at least five women in 1888, the man who had never been caught or identified, the man who some said had fled London for Manhattan, the man who (just conceivably) could still be alive in 1960.



My widening eyes were on the fog-shrouded bridge before us, but my thoughts . . .! My thoughts were a continent, a century away . . . That's why, to this day, I can't approach the G. W. Bridge from that off ramp without thinking of the Whitechapel Murderer.

That's why, too, when it came time to run the final installment of our Herman Cohen interview—the section focusing almost exclusively on Herm's great Holmes versus Ripper opus, A STUDY IN TERROR—yours truly leapt at the chance to write a companion piece.

Hope you have fun with it. I certainly did. And let it be a lesson never to burn your bridges behind you!

Before I forget, I want to mention that it's now possible to send SCARLET LETTERS via E-Mail at reditor@aol.com. All those addicted to the Internet can now join in the fiendish fun. Just sign on!

We've gotten quite a positive response to last issue's Reader's Survey, and I'm very pleased that, for the most part, you like what we're doing here on the Street.

Oddly enough, the only complaint that found its way into more than one response (and then it was only two or three) is that we're a little rough on poor ol' Newt Gingrich, and that such railery has no place in *Scarlet Street*.

Let me be clear on this: If the Newtster were doing no more than raping the rest of the country, making it tough (if not impossible) on the young and the old and the poor and the restless, then perhaps *Scarlet Street* wouldn't be the place to say anything. But the Gingrich Gang is out to wipe PBS off the face of the Earth, and the same folks who think we're being mean to him are also loyal viewers of MYSTERY! Support Mr. Gingrich if you must, say I, but remember that by doing so you may find yourself bidding adieu to Sherlock Holmes, Inspector Morse, Rumpole of the Bailey, Inspector Allyn, and a host of old crime-solving companions. Newt thinks we shouldn't have 'em, not on a television network that dares to offer views other than Newt's . . .

And that's why this editor, this column, and this magazine will continue to tell Gingrich and Company exactly what we think of them.

Unaccustomed as I am to stepping aside and letting someone else take the floor (with the exception, that is, of Madame Publisher, who has a really fine collection of floors stored in her attic), I want to temporarily turn this column over to Scarlet Staffer Kevin G. Shinnick. Kevin has quite a tale to tell, and here it is in mostly his own words (well, I am the editor):

On Wednesday, April 12, 1995, this writer had the unique experience of actually "solving" a murder on the Orient Express!

I had been acting with a group called "Murder to Go," performing an interactive sci-fi mystery called DEEP SPACE NOIR, when another actor and I were informed that we had been hired to perform aboard



The new Mrs. DeWinter (Joan Fontaine) gets a cold reception from Mrs. Danvers (Judith Anderson) in Hitchcock's *REBECCA* (1940). Olivier hovers.

mately confessed: "You can't direct bubbles . . .") as for the many numbers shot but cut when the film ran to Wagnerian lengths. Several outtakes, including Kay Thompson's elaborate arrangement of the Gershwins' "Liza," and the rather limp "We'll Meet Again in Honolulu," are heard on the CD.

The film is a gloriously mixed bag. However amusing on first viewing, the comedy routines sandwiched between the musical numbers do not bear up awfully well over repeated viewings. Quite durable, though, are

such musical highlights as the wonderful opening by Roger Edens (music) and Arthur Freed (lyrics), "Here's to the Girls" (a number that seems to have influenced Stephen Sondheim's opening Ziegfeld tribute in the 1970 Broadway musical *FOLLIES* more than any true *Follies* number), the beautiful Harry Warren/Freed "This Heart of Mine," and luscious Lena Horne's torrid "Love" by ST LOUIS songwriters Martin and Blaine.

The absolute peak of *ZIEGFELD FOLLIES* is Minnelli's "Limehouse Blues" sequence, a virtual feature within a feature and so extended that the CD encompasses only half the music. Filmed on the redressed *PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY* (1945) London set, and partially shot in those gorgeous, smoky mezzotints that were an MGM trademark, the episode is a curiously bittersweet, somewhat sordid tale of unrequited love and death, rather jolting in the overall frivolous context of the rest of the film, but also characteristic of Minnelli's dark un-

derside. During a storefront robbery, innocent bystander Fred Astaire is shot as he is tempted to retrieve a fan coveted by Lucille Bremer (as a Suzie Wong without a heart of gold), his dying hallucination being a monumentally kitsch nirvana of Chinoiserie in which he partners Bremer in an intricate fan dance, the whole thing scored as if by Maurice Ravel on opium!

ZIEGFELD FOLLIES is also available in a combination CD/video Deluxe Collectors Set, with the film itself remastered in stereo and the best approximation of peak-period MGM Technicolor I've ever seen on video. For the compulsive Leophile, the original overture, exit music, and trailer are thrown in (on the video), and it's great to see those Petty Girls on the cover art. With all those outtakes percolating in the vaults, can a *ZIEGFELD II* be far behind? I hope not. To quote *THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!* (1974): "Boy, do we need it now!"

Bernard Herrmann alert: Next up from Rhino is the soundtrack of *NORTH BY NORTHWEST* (1959).

Ross Carr is a composer and author. His article on the lesser-known shows and films of Cole Porter will appear in a new book, Performing Arts Theater, to be published by the Library of Congress this summer.

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Herman Cohen's *A STUDY IN TERROR* (in wild blood color) shares a double bill with William Castle's *STRAIT JACKET* at Detroit's lavish Fox Theatre—which is owned by Herman Cohen!

Herman Cohen: Oh, I've done all kinds of films. I did *CRIME OF PASSION* with Barbara Stanwyck and Sterling Hayden. I did the last Abbott and Costello film, *DANCE WITH ME, HENRY*. I did *MAGNIFICENT ROUGHNECKS* with Mickey Rooney and Jack Carson, and *TARGET EARTH*, which was one of the first big sci-fi pictures, for Allied Artists. It was my first independent production for my company. I've done a lot of pictures other than horror.

Jessie Lilley: Still, fans associate your name more with teenage horrors than with Sherlock Holmes, even though you made *A STUDY IN TERROR*.

HC: Well, I did a lot of films in London. I had an office and also a flat in London and spent a lot of time there. Prior to *A STUDY IN TERROR*, I was involved in at least seven or eight pictures in London. In fact, I did a film for the British government *OPERATION MALAYA*, which I went to Malaya for.

JL: How did *A STUDY IN TERROR* come about?

HC: What happened is that I met Henry Lester, who was represent-

ing the Conan Doyle estate. At that time, they still held the copyright on Sherlock Holmes; you had to make a deal with the estate, which we did on *A STUDY IN TERROR*. Henry Lester had talked to a pair of independent producers in London who were interested in making a Sherlock Holmes picture, but they didn't have the money. I got the idea of pitting Sherlock Holmes against Jack the Ripper, which Conan Doyle never wrote. He wrote *A Study in Scarlet*, but this was an original that we came up with: *A STUDY IN TERROR*.

JL: That wasn't the original title, though, was it?

HC: At first the title was *FOG*, which I liked. The head of advertising at Columbia Pictures, Bob Ferguson, came up with the title *A STUDY IN TERROR*. I didn't like it because of the word "study." I fought them and said, "Look, I don't believe people will be interested in a horror film with the word 'study' in it."

JL: But that's the title they finally used. Was it difficult to come up with a good script?

HC: Donald and Derek Ford did the original story and screenplay, but then we brought in a top writer named Harry Craig to do the final screenplay with me. And that's how I got involved in Sherlock Holmes and *A STUDY IN TERROR*.

JL: Did the Conan Doyle estate have much say in the script?

HC: No. Henry Lester represented the estate and Conan Doyle's son, Adrian, and part of the deal we made was that he would get a credit on the film. He was involved, in other words, just to make things easy. I consulted him on everything, including the casting. We got along very well. When we moved to Shepperton Studios, I suggested that we put a desk in my office for Henry, so he wouldn't feel slighted and would see what was being done. But he was not a producer; he was just excited to be involved with the film.

JL: What was the family's reaction to the film?

HC: Oh, they loved it. Adrian Conan Doyle and his wife came to the set several times. That marvelous lo-

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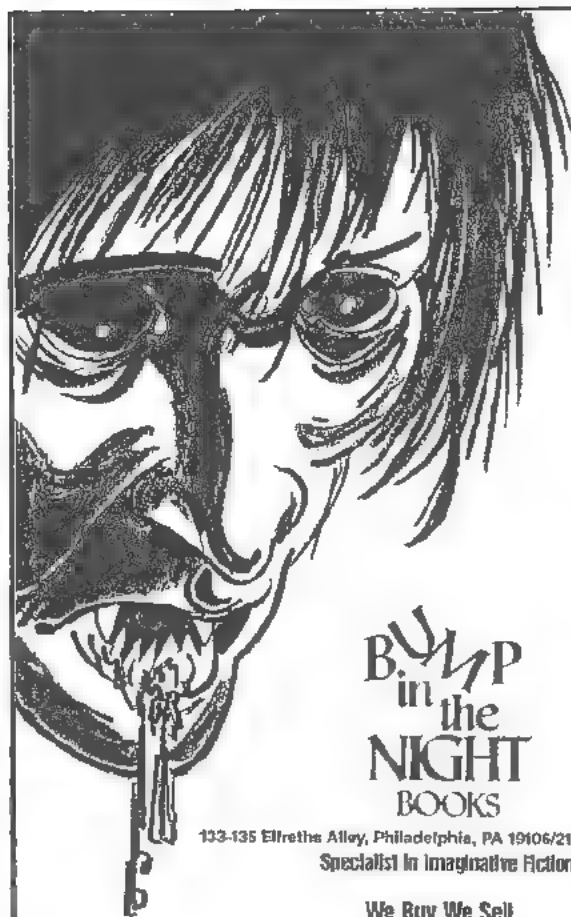
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IN SEARCH OF PHILO VANCE PART TWO

by Paul M. Jensen

Because the first four Philo Vance films were made at the peak of the novels' popularity, they are exceptionally faithful to the spirit (if not always the details) of Vance's methods and ideas. Willard Huntington Wright, the books' author, could not have expected this to be the case, for in a 1927 essay he wrote that the detective story "is the only type of fiction that cannot be filmed." He based this statement on the assumed incompatibility of silent films with the detective's use of dialogue for interrogations and explanations. After the arrival of sound, however, he declared that "the screen is really the finest medium for the detective" (*New York Times*, November 1, 1931).

Paramount filmed *THE CANARY MURDER CASE* as a silent, directed by Malcolm St. Clair, then reconceived it as a talkie and had director Frank Tuttle reshoot substantial portions. The finished film is an odd hybrid that mixes dialogue shots with footage retained from the silent version. This occurs in several scenes, including all those involving the Canary (Louise Brooks). Because the actress was not available for reshooting, the studio combined silent shots of her with a dubbed voice and new footage.

Some rewriting of the plot occurred during this revision process. In the novel, Spottswode has had an affair with the Canary and she is blackmailing him, so he kills her. The film retains him as the murderer, but provides a new motive: Jimmie (Spottswode's son and a totally new character) has had the affair and the Canary is trying to force him into marriage, so Spottswode (Charles Lane) kills her to protect his son. The studio probably added both Jimmie and the new motive when rewriting the film; that would explain why we never see Jimmie (James Hall) or his fiancée, Alice (Jean Arthur), with the singer. In the first scene, footage from the silent version introduces the Canary and her three other lovers (and future suspects), but Jimmie's involvement and Alice's recent fight with her are only discussed later.

Ironically, considering Wright's preference for sound over silence, *CANARY* is more interesting in its



nondialogue portions, which convey information visually. The first scene includes a part of the Canary's act in which she glides on a swing over the heads of the audience. As she shows herself off but stays out of reach, and the men gaze up at her adoringly, the viewer discovers the characters and their relationships, instead of being told about them. In the dialogue segments, the people just stand or sit and talk. The entire second scene, of Jimmie and Alice chatting with Spottswode, occurs in a single shot. Other conversations contain a little editing, but only among the few angles that could be filmed by cameras running simultaneously. Typically, information about Alice is awkwardly forced into the dialogue: Sergeant Heath (Eugene Pallette) asks, mainly for our benefit, "Isn't she the dame that had the battle with the Canary the other night over young Spottswode?"

The writers were so busy revamping the film for sound that they don't let Vance (William Powell) explain his theory of detection, but at least we get to see that theory in action. Looking around the victim's ransacked apartment, Heath assumes that she surprised a robber and "put up a battle and they wrecked the joint." Vance straightens him out by noting that, although a table lamp lies on the floor, its bulbs aren't broken, so the killer probably placed it there to give the impression of a struggle. Later, Vance points out the neatness of the clothes closet's interior and the fact that its key is on the inside of the door; he concludes that a second intruder had hidden in the closet during the murder, which kept that area from being disrupted.

As often happens in the novels, Vance decides who committed the murder separately from how it was done. Just past the film's midpoint, he declares, "I can come pretty close to the psychology of the man who committed this murder," but cannot identify him yet. Because "a man's true nature always comes out in a game of poker," he sets one up with the suspects. As Vance later explains, the killer has "a mind capable of working out a well-planned and brilliant course of action" and is "willing to take a desperate chance and see it through." When Spottswode bluffs boldly but calmly during the game, Vance picks him as the only one "psychologically



being a flaw or a cheat, this kind of manipulation—when carefully used—provides what most readers and viewers truly seek: not a chance to beat the detective to the solution, but an opportunity to be surprised and impressed at the detective's revelations.

The film version offers some revealing examples of how movie technique and fairness interact. When Vance first looks around the Canary's apartment, the director does not provide a shot of the lamp until Vance points it out, so we cannot beat the detective to the punch. We do get a closeup of the key in the closet's lock as soon as Vance sees it, but he immediately mentions this to Heath, so we have no time to think before it is discussed. A shot of the *Bankers Review* initially interests viewers, but other events distract us and we quickly forget about it. At the end, however, the magazine figures into the solution, so the director has adroitly planted it in our awareness while keeping us from dwelling on its significance.

Despite tightening events and altering some character traits, Paramount was generally faithful to the plot of *'Canary'*, and its adaptation of *Greene* even more closely matches its source: In both book and film, three members of the less than sympathetic Greene family die, which conveniently reduces the number of possible suspects. Occasionally, director Frank Tuttle lets us share Vance's observations. In one case, the detective glances down at an open medical case, but a closeup of the object reveals nothing to the viewer, who can't know that some medications are missing. Later, Vance (William Powell) watches the family's cook speak reassuringly in German to Ada Greene (Jean Arthur): because this happens in an extreme long shot, we see Vance notice the other woman's concern, without the point becoming obvious. The scriptwriters do alter the climax, replacing a cliff with the mansion's rooftop patio. In both cases, Ada nearly causes Sybella Greene (Florence Eldridge) to fall to her death.

Cinematically, *GREENE* seems less bound by technical limitations than *CANARY*, and it even includes some fluid tracking shots. Nevertheless, Tuttle fails to make the many conversation scenes visual, so the overall pace drags. Although Vance doesn't explain his

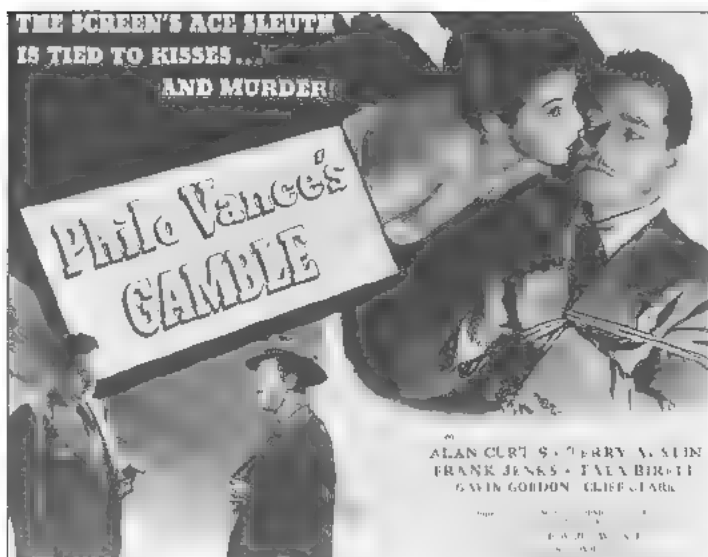
methods, he does state that "the only way" the murderer will be identified is by considering the psychological pattern, and he once typically declares that the case is "so logical it's—insane."

MGM's *THE BISHOP MURDER CASE* is equally true to its source. The film begins traditionally, with the discovery of a corpse; after Vance (Basil Rathbone) is called in, we meet the characters when he does and learn what he does, when he does. This almost always happens through dialogue, without the visual exposition that had forced its way into *CANARY*. We often see the action in long shots, with the people spread out so widely that their heads reach only the middle of the image, leaving the top half filled with wall. The result resembles a proscenium stage setting viewed from a distant seat.

As if to make up for being verbal and visually static the film provides some atmosphere during certain scenes, including three subsequent murders. In one case, the camera starts on a radio (to establish the source of the background music), pans to a shadow of the killer's hand completing a house of cards, then moves to the body slumped on a desk as the hand places a chess piece on top of the cards. A later suspense scene evokes the nervousness of Bebe (Leila Hyams) by showing her reflections in a three-part vanity mirror. When she rises to investigate strange sounds in the attic, a clock's pendulum swings in the foreground.

That these two kinds of scenes look so different from each other comes as no surprise, because the film credits Nick Grinde with "screen direction" and David Burton with "stage direction." This division of labor might have seemed sensible when sound films were young, but *BISHOP*'s inconsistent style and plodding pace make it uncomfortable to watch. This discomfort is increased by the acting, which has a heightened dramatic quality that feels derived from the stage.

Nevertheless, *BISHOP* clearly illustrates Vance's style of investigation and his view of criminal ingenuity. It is full of clues, but virtually all of them point to innocent people. These red herrings were planted not by the author to mislead the viewer, but by the guilty party to mislead the detective and ultimately convict the man whom he is out to destroy.



LEFT: *CALLING PHILO VANCE* (1940) starred James Stephenson as the formerly suave sleuth. RIGHT: *PHILO VANCE'S GAMBLE* (1947) was a PRC effort starring Alan Curtis.

PHILO VANCE

Continued from page 92

solves to a similar shot of it being placed on a table and opened for examination. This concise sequence conveys the action in only a few seconds, while requiring that the viewer's eye and mind adapt to constantly changing images.

Perhaps the best example of the writer's collaboration with the director occurs during the early exposition. We hear a telephone ring, but see only a table with a large wall mirror above it. Reflected in the mirror, Coe's butler descends a flight of stairs. His reflection moves out of view, then the real person abruptly enters in the foreground and answers the phone. After a little dialogue he says he'll try to locate Coe, and hangs up. In a closeup of an address book, his finger finds the name and number of Doris Delafield. At this, a blurred pan rushes us to a closeup of Delafield's phone as it starts to ring. Then, in a shot of her wall mirror, we hear a scream as a woman's figure backs rapidly across the screen in the foreground, and then reappears reflected in the mirror. The camera pans to a medium shot of the actual person, who shouts, "Get out!" Finally, Archer Coe, the previously unseen man from whom she retreated, steps into the shot. The visuals in this sequence match the woman's excitement and keep the viewer's eye active.

Curtiz also keeps the viewer involved by placing the camera at about waist level in many long shots, instead of the usual eye level, and occasionally shooting from behind a bookcase or a closet's rack of clothes. When Liang (James Lee), a servant, speaks about Coe's collection of Chinese porcelain, Curtiz cuts to shots of those objects as we hear the dialogue; we aren't forced to stay in one place, watching people talk. During Vance's account of the murder, the flashbacks that illustrate his words utilize subjective camera work to hide the killer's identity. Such astute, imaginative direction combines with a tightly constructed script to create an anomaly: a verbal, cerebral film that has a lively sense of action.

Dr. Doremus, the chief medical examiner, appeared in some previous Vance films, but in *KENNEL* Etienne Girardot plays him for the first time. That diminutive

actor's frail form contrasts vividly with his energetic grumbling about having his meals interrupted and jaunty comments like, "Well, there are too many people in the world anyway," that he easily steals each of his three scenes. By depicting cynical irascibility without becoming callously inhuman, Girardot makes his Doremus perhaps the most accurately realized of all Wright's recurring characters

Warner Bros. followed *KENNEL* with *THE DRAGON MURDER CASE*, a film interesting mainly for the way its failures contrast with *KENNEL*'s successes. As before, the writers use the first 10 minutes to introduce the main characters, who gather at a house party on the rural estate of Rudolph Stamm (Robert Barrat). At one point, they watch some Siamese fighting fish (part of Stamm's aquatic collection), which serve as a kind of mirror reflecting their own relationships. When Monty (George Meeker), the fiancé of Stamm's sister (Margaret Lindsay), dives into the "Dragon Pool," he never emerges and no sign of his body is found.

The opening reveals so much of the characters' limited personalities that very little remains for Vance to uncover. This approach worked for *KENNEL*, because its puzzle was so complex that he still had plenty to do. Unfortunately, *DRAGON*—both novel and film—is bereft of clues and deductions. Vance (Warren William) talks to Stamm's giggly old mother (Helen Lowell), who claims to have seen a dragon that attacks her family's enemies. Vance has the pool drained, but finds only the marks of what looks like claws. Exploring some glacial potholes nearby, he discovers Monty's corpse, strangled and bearing clawlike bruises. Vance wonders if Stamm has bred some sort of monster! He asks for the key to the estate's vault, only to find it missing. Then he departs to make some vague arrangements. Meanwhile, Markham (Robert McWade) and Heath (Eugene Palette) find the missing key.

On his return, Vance restages the events at the pool, with Stamm diving in as Monty had. Underwater, a clawed hand grabs Stamm, then a man in a diving suit brings him to the surface, unconscious and suffering from shock. The diver's glove has clawlike hooks on it. After this, Vance uses the rediscovered key to enter the

I've been tempted to bump him off myself." Skipworth moves beyond her usual charm and reveals sincere sorrow and distress, so it does not feel inconsistent when Mrs. Llewellyn writes a phony confession and shoots herself to shield her son. Donald Cook readily conveys Lynn's weak nature, but his maniacal glare when he reveals his guilt to Vance is equally convincing. Lynn's wife, who flaunts her decision to return to the stage despite the family's resistance, is cruel and selfish in a youthfully oblivious way. Amelia's bitterness about her family and fear for her life emerge in an especially well-acted drunk scene. Her fiancé, the family doctor, is just emotionless enough to make viewers wonder if he is a fortune hunter. These are not just suspects or comic figures; they are rounded human beings, sympathetic even when not likeable. They are, in fact, more interesting than their counterparts in the book.

Director Edwin L. Marin elicits these above-average performances from an unusually good cast, moving effortlessly between the light romance of Vance and Doris and the more serious aspects. Thanks to a plethora of events and insights, he has no need of film technique to keep the viewer attentive, although some scenes do include moody, menacing shadows. The background music may sometimes be over-insistent, but one use of music is surprisingly imaginative: As Vance investigates the hunting lodge where Kinkaid conducts his experiments, he leaves Doris in the car listening to "Les Preludes." Not wanting to be left alone, she follows him into the night, and the music continues on the soundtrack while a heavy rainstorm buffets her about. This gives the images a serial-like, melodramatic quality that is both enjoyably atmospheric and charmingly satiric.

The writers evidently realized that Dr. Doremus had repeated himself in *DRAGON*, so in *CASINO* he complains not about having his meals interrupted, but about being dragged out of a sound sleep and called in half-shaved. Charles Sellon fits the part, but Etienne Girardot is missed.

Also missed is Eugene Pallette, who played Sergeant Heath in all but one of the previous films. Pallette's Heath was always more dense and comic than the character in the books. Jumping to conclusions that are "as plain as the nose on your face" and declaring "We were right, Mr. Vance," he was excessive, if amusing. (James Donlan, who played Heath in *BISHOP*, was less blustery than Pallette, but also less memorable.) In *CASINO*, Ted Healy's performance as Heath immediately puts Pallette into perspective. From the moment Healy enters, wrapped in the casino's curtains, his obnoxious stupidity is entirely out of place. He inspires fond memories of Pallette's cheerfully confident gravel voice, his relative naturalness, and the brief moments when his Heath and Vance seem honestly to like each other.

Unexpectedly, *CASINO* retains Wright's "vigilante" elimination of the villain. Vance had the bullets in Lynn's gun replaced with blanks, but when Lynn fires, the detective collapses to the floor, anyhow. After Heath rushes in and kills Lynn, Vance rises and explains the facts. "Easier on the family," he says, "and I knew you wouldn't shoot unless you thought he'd polished me off." Paul Lukas handles this charming ruthlessness well—but even he is denied the world-weariness of the book's character, who says, "No pothor. No trial. No jury. Justice triumphant nevertheless. Life goes on. But why?"

If *DRAGON* was a major disappointment after *KENNEL*, *THE GARDEN MURDER CASE* doesn't suffer quite the same fate—it is a disappointment compared



Warren William as Philo Vance

with *CASINO*, but not a major one. Screenwriter Bertram Millhauser discards Wright's plot, retaining only the horse-race context, the characters' names, and the selfishness of the family matriarch (changed, however, from Mrs. Garden to Mrs. Hamble). He omits the roof-garden setting, and alters many personalities and the choice of who will die and how. He also adds the characters of Major Fenwick-Raiston (H. B. Warner) and his wife (Frieda Inescort) and provides a totally new resolution.

Millhauser's extensive alterations are not in themselves bad, for Wright's novel lacks freshness. It begins with an anonymous telephone message warning of danger at the Gardens' apartment (comparable to the anonymous letter that sets *Casino's* plot in motion); young Floyd Garden's resentment of his parents recalls Lynn Llewellyn's feelings about his rela-

tives; the police consider one death a suicide until Vance calls it murder (as in *Kenel*); and the amount of blood present suggests that the man was shot elsewhere (as in *Bishop*).

Despite the crime's unimpressive solution, Wright's climax is original and dramatic, if hard to believe. In both book and film, Vance's investigation leads to an attempt on his life that exposes the murderer. In the novel, after making some unknown arrangements with Heath (another now-familiar device), Vance accompanies Nurse Beeton to the roof garden. Suddenly she screams and rushes back to report that he had stood on the parapet, lost his balance, and fallen to his death. Just as suddenly, Vance appears and states that she had pushed him; he deliberately provided her with a chance to kill him and she took it. Thanks to his preparations, though, the act was photographed and he didn't die because he was wearing a vest attached to a support wire! Exposed and trapped, Nurse Beeton jumps to her own death.

The film opens at a racetrack, where Vance (Edmund Lowe) encounters most of the other characters. Floyd Garden (Douglas Walton), about to participate in a race, seems dazed and says, "I've got to break my

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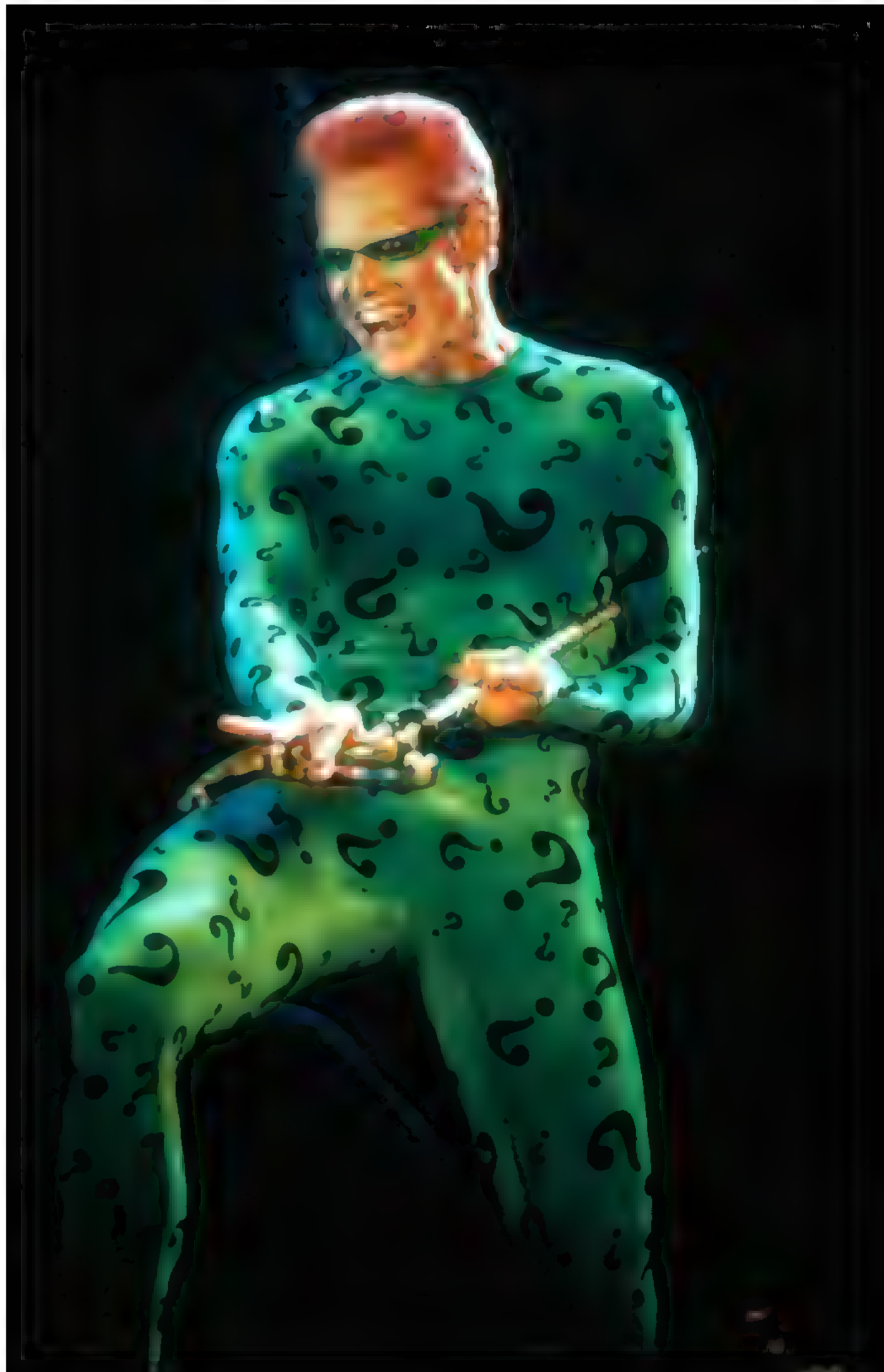
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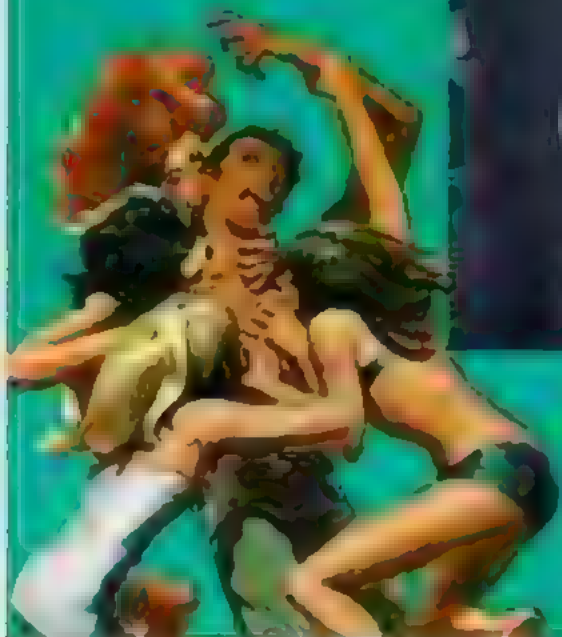
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